

A PROGRESSIVE PREACHER

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GRAPHO





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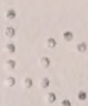




# A PROGRESSIVE PREACHER

By GRAPHO *pseud.*

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## CONTENTS

I.	THE GIRL HE OUTGREW.....	9
II.	BEFORE AND AFTER.....	17
III.	SEX IN PREACHING.....	25
IV.	NEW ARRIVALS .....	35
V.	A DAY OF DANGER.....	43
VI.	A ROMANCE WITH A MISSING LINK..	49
VII.	TO BE OR NOT TO BE A BACHELOR....	55
VIII.	A HINT TO FIRE UP.....	61
IX.	THE BEAUTY SPOT OF AMERICA.....	67
X.	MONEY-MAKING MAGIC .....	77
XI.	RUSHING A ROMANCE.....	85
XII.	A DAY WITH THE MOSSBACKS.....	93
XIII.	A BANKER'S DAUGHTER IN THE PULPIT	99
XIV.	A PULLMAN PORTER'S PHILOSOPHY....	115
XV.	THE MAN ON THE ROAD.....	123
XVI.	AT HOME AGAIN.....	131
XVII.	A MINISTER AND TROUBLE.....	139
XVIII.	A LITTLE LIST OF CALLERS.....	147



XIX.	WHEN THE MAIL MAN CAME.....	157
XX.	SHE READ HUXLEY AND WAS MOVED TO REMARK .....	167
XXI.	THE PROBLEM OF THE AFFECTIONS...	175
XXII.	HOW TO REACH THE PREACHER.....	187
XXIII.	A HEART TO HEART TALK.....	195
XXIV.	A MINISTER'S WIFE.....	205
XXV.	A THEOLOGICAL ROUGH AND TUMBLE..	213
XXVI.	BROTHER AND BOTHER.....	225
XXVII.	WHEN RUMOR GOT ON THE WING....	237
XXVIII.	PREPARING FOR THE STRANGER ON EARTH .....	243
XXIX.	WHEN THE SHADOW FELL.....	251
XXX.	ARE WE IMMORTAL? .....	259
XXXI.	A SKEPTIC'S FOUR-FOLD CHALLENGE..	269
XXXII.	THE EVOLUTION OF AN EVOLUTIONIST	281
XXXIII.	A NEW YEAR AND ANOTHER CHURCH	293
XXXIV.	THE RESIGNATION AND RETURN TO FLORIDA .....	303
XXXV.	UNDER THE LINGER-LONGER TREE....	313



## CHAPTER I.

### THE GIRL HE OUTGREW.

**I** WAS in Florida, on a bank of the beautiful Indian river fishing. I had reached the winter resort on Saturday evening, preached for the leading church of the place on Sunday, and now I was out bright and early on Monday morning to try my luck with hook and line. Bob Bamby, the man who took my baggage to the hotel, had come along with me to point out the place where the fish were sure to bite and that right early. "You will get a fish there in two minutes," said Bob.

I threw in my line, full of expectation, but did not get a bite nor a nibble. Time passed, and so did the fish.

"The wind is in the wrong direction," Bob said.

"It always is," I replied.

"The fish bit well yesterday," he urged.

"Yes," I said, "that is when fish bite, yesterday or last week. I wish I could fish yesterday or last week."

Bob said that he must be going to meet a train, and he left. I staid on the job and kept staying, until I felt a nibble. Oh, the joy of a first nibble after a long wait! It thrills you so, starts such a train of expectation. But the nibble did not repeat itself—all was quiet on the Indian river. The wind was not right,



there was nothing doing in my line. The monotony was becoming thick and heavy, and I was losing faith in the whole situation and was about to give it up. But just then I heard some one approaching. I looked and saw a broad hat, a ribbon fluttering in the wind, a white waist, a handsome girl. There was spring in her movements, and the boy who followed her with a basket and fish pole looked as if he were going somewhere.

When the young lady saw me, a smile of recognition started to part her lips but was arrested in its course; and a little shadow passed over her fine face. I recognized her as a member of the congregation on Sunday morning. She was in the pew of a northern banker who had a winter home in the resort, so I was told, and I took it for granted that she was his daughter. I also remembered that I had seen a shadow of disappointment during the sermon when I expressed some advanced views. It was evident that she did not like them.

On approaching she said, "I beg your pardon, sir, but I trust that it will not disturb you if I fish here."

I told her that nothing could disturb me, that my luck was past feeling and the monotony had become too dense to be desirable, that I should like to have something happen. With an amused look she turned to the boy and told him to bait her hook, which he did with cheerful obedience, and which I would have done with even more alacrity. In about two minutes she had a fish. I felt annoyed, not at her luck, but at my own. The boy took off the fish, baited her hook, and she caught another fish, and another, half a dozen. The boy looked at her adoringly and at me contemptuously, and I did not blame him for either look. I felt cast down, outdone, outclassed, forsaken of fortune, cumbering the river bank for nothing. It is an



awful feeling to have, catching nothing and somebody along side of you catching fish every minute, especially if that somebody is a smart girl.

She smilingly said to the boy, "Andrew, you certainly do know how to bait a hook, perhaps if you put the bait on the gentleman's hook he would have better luck. I felt humiliated by the suggestion, but submitted. Presently I felt a bite, gave a pull and brought out a toad fish. The boy snorted and the girl struggled with herself to keep down her laughter. A toad fish is the most bloated humbug that you see in Florida out side of a promoter's office.

The next time I had better luck and brought up a real fish, but it was too small even for imagination to work upon and make into a big fish story, and the story is more important than the fish. I wanted something which my after recollection could develop into a goodsized story without stretching itself too much. The young woman kept on with her luck until her basket was well filled, and she prepared to leave. I felt relieved, and also as if I was about to lose something. After taking a step or two she turned around and said, "I do not wish to seem obtrusive, but I am reluctant to leave without saying that I know you. We have met before."

I assured her that it must have given me much pleasure, but I could not remember when or where it was. "Perhaps it will come to me," I added, "when I have more time to think about it."

"I will give you time," she replied, and started home. The boy followed her with triumphant step and a withering backward glance over his shoulder at me. He surely thought that he was the "Queen's Own."

I may have caught some fish after the departure of the successful young lady, but I do not remember,



for I was trying to think where I had met her. I could not recall any girl of a previous acquaintance who looked so smart, and the only clew which I could find in my memory was through her voice. There was a suggestion of music in it which I seemed to have heard before, but could not chase it down. I went back through all kinds of music which I had heard in the past, from the warbling of a bird to the wild scream of a soprano trying to strike a high note, but I did not come up with the girl. I gave it up, and the fishing also.

The next morning I received a letter from my mother, and of course she urged me to take care of my health. "Keep out of doors," she said, "get fresh air and take on tan. Fishing is good for both. Go fishing. If you come back with a good coat of tan people will think you much improved in health. Put it on thick."

I agreed with mother and went fishing again. The young woman did not come, which did not matter, for I was getting fresh air and tan and a few fish. However, I frequently looked along the path by which she had come the day before. She did not come the next morning nor the next. Then I stopped fishing and walked over into the park for fresh air and tan. To my surprise I found the young lady sitting on a bench under a live oak. There was an inquiring expression on her face as I approached, but I was obliged to confess that my memory had failed me, that I could not recall a former meeting, greatly to my disappointment.

"Perhaps I can assist you," she said; "Your father was pastor in our place when I was ten or eleven years old; and that is where we met. You were in the high school and I was in the grammar school. But you passed along our street on the way to school;



and now and then, when we had a hard problem in arithmetic, you helped us."

"Yes, I remember that, and now I remember you—little Ethel Kingsley. How strange that I had forgotten your name and you! But you were not a banker's daughter then."

"No, we were very poor, too poor to be remembered," she added with a smile.

"Not exactly," I said, "for one thing which I do remember is that you cried one day when the girls made fun of your clothes, and I had to call them down for it."

"And I did not forget that. Our poverty was one of my trials, and it made life less interesting for the whole family. But father had pluck and mamma had faith. He worked, and she prayed, and I trotted along with the family procession. The fact was that papa had a mining proposition out West, a regular hole in the ground which took all his money; but bye and bye they struck ore, and then the money came fast, plenty of it. Then he went East and became a banker. Now he is a man of means, not dreadfully or disastrously rich, but rich enough to require considerable piety to keep his poise."

"It was stupid in me not to remember a family who stood by father as faithfully as yours did. Now that I recall it all, I remember that my father used to think you a good listener for a little girl."

"Yes, I could understand some things which he said," she replied with a little play on the words.

"Better than you did me last Sunday. I got the impression that you did not quite like my sermon."

"It was brilliant."

"That is nothing; sermons are supposed to feed people, not dazzle them."



She looked up at a mocking bird which was singing gloriously on a limb above, and then remarked that some congregations must be doubly hungry for their Sunday dinners.

"I am sorry to have disappointed you with the first sermon that you heard me preach after these years."

"Disappointed is a big word," she said, "and I want to go slow in talking about preaching. It is difficult work. I presume that I had expected you to preach as your father did."

"But if we preached as our fathers did, where would progress be? For is not that what progress means, that one generation improves upon another? If sons did not outgrow their fathers the world would not grow at all."

"That is true, and I think that is what ails me; you have outgrown me. I always thought you would arrive."

"I wish I had."

"What? Pastor of a large church in a big city, and still in your twenties; if that is not arriving, what is?"

"That is the outside of it. The inside of it is what troubles me."

"Our renewed acquaintance is too brief to discuss that part of it," she said with a smile, and then added, as she rose to go, "you will come to see us soon, won't you?"

I would have called in half an hour, if I had consulted my impulses. She was interesting. I had never before met a girl just like her. It was reported around the resort that her father was a man of much wealth and that she had been given all the advantages of college and travel that money could provide. And yet her religion was old-fashioned, and one of her friends remarked that she seemed more concerned



to have the world keep its road to Heaven straight than the automobile people were to have a highway cemented and sand-papered. I thought I should like to give her old theology a downhill push when the time came, but did not feel sure of what might happen to me if I set her mental machinery in motion. There was a subtle something about her which made me think that, when it came to intellectual doings, she could give plenty of trouble to an antagonist and go away laughing after the fray was over. Anyhow it was hard to believe that this Miss Kingsley was once the plain little girl whom I saw listening to my father's sermons with round-eyed wonder.







## CHAPTER II.

### BEFORE AND AFTER.

**A**FTER Miss Kingsley had gone I walked over to what was called the Linger-Longer Tree. In front was a beautiful view of the great river, but the long streamers of moss and the broad leaves of the palmettos near by gave it a somewhat secluded appearance. While sitting on the rustic bench looking at the fish which leaped out of the water, gleamed in the sunshine and then shot down into the depths again, Bob Bamby, the expressman, came along.

"Why do they call this the Linger-Longer Tree?" I asked.

"If you had seen them young people lingerin' here as often as I have you would not ask that question," he replied with a chuckle.

"The view is fine," I said.

"Yes," replied Bob, "the young people look at the river a little bit and then at one another a long time. The view is fine, Parson, very fine. Going fishing tomorrow?"

"I don't know. Are the fish biting well?"

"For some people," he replied with another chuckle.

"Sorry that you could not keep up with the young lady the other day. She is popular, the popularest girl in this resort."

"What makes her so popular? What does she do?"



"Oh, she don't do much of anything, just looks pretty and is not stuck up. I don't mind high-up folks, if they are not stuck up. Some of these people who come down here never talk to other people, only to one another, and I tell you, Parson, there are a good many other people in the world. The whole Kingsley family seems to know that, and it makes me like them. When I took the young lady's trunk over the first time she came, I saw that she had her brown eyes on me, watching for the woodwork, and I handled that trunk as if it was a baby. She said, 'Thank you, Mr. Bamby, you did that nicely.' That fetched me. I was 'Mr. Bamby.' I walked out of the house on air. One of them young dudes with the little black coat and yellow pants and cane would have been proud to have the banker's daughter notice him, and here she was speakin' to me as if I owned land or was putting up at a Flagler hotel. Such things count, Parson."

"Then she does something which makes her popular; she calls you Mr. Bamby. Have you been here long?"

"Yes, sir, Before and After."

"What do you mean by that?"

"What do I mean by Before and After?" Come down here where we can see further and I will show you what I mean. Do you see them empty houses over there? The woods in this region is full of them. There used to be people in them; now there is nothing in them but bats, ghosts and heart-breaks. A lot of people come here from the North with their heads plumb full of ideas and money in their pockets which was achin' to get away from them. They allowed that the folks down here didn't know nothin', or at least, not enough to fill a page in a child's primer, and they had wagon loads of book learning



and other furnishings for setting up in business. They said we didn't know enough about our soil to raise a disturbance on it, but they would show us something and collect when the show was over. I wish I had half the money them people was each and severally going to make. I would go down to the Royal Poinciana and strut around like the rest of them plutocrats, and Lucy would take the eleven o'clock bath every morning and sit in the loggia and look swell like the rest of them. And they did make money; made it fly, I mean, setting out orange groves and more orange groves. And I admit they were not altogether to blame, for an orange grove can be mighty deceivin'. When you ride across the country and see the orange trees in bloom, it looks like a weddin' procession all the way, and the man thinks that gettin' an orange grove is like marryin' an heir-ess. And when he sees an orange peepin' through the green leaves so yellow and golden he thinks it good as gold, worth a hundred cents on the dollar every time. But an orange can have more sweet juice in it and more gall than anything that ever growed. It can divorce the fellow that gets the bridal procession idea in his head from a big wad of good money.

"Well, one day when the oranges were all ripe, and everybody saw a fortune coming up the front path without stopping to shut the gate, a north wind started this way, comin' down after its friends and former acquaintances to remind them of old times, I s'pose. It had a shiver in it, I tell you, but the people thought if they set up with it that night it would keep on blowin' as they used to do about the money they were goin' to make. For you know when the wind blows Jack Frost don't venture out. But when the sun set that evenin', the wind got tired and just



laid down on the job. Then Jack Frost come out with both feet shod with desolation, as you said in your sermon yesterday, and what he didn't do to them orange groves isn't worth mentioning. He hardly left enough of some of them to stub your toe on. The country went so dead that even the buzzards didn't want to fly over it. Then the people began to get homesick for their mother-in-laws and other folks up North, and they faded out of sight, went back where they could get more on the dollar for their surplus knowledge.

"That black night was the dividin' line. Since then we call it Before and After. But that was not all. Them people were goin' to raise a lot of other things, towns, for instance, and cities with all the modern improvements. Well, that is a good idea if you keep your seat in the saddle and hold on to the reins. But they didn't do either. They let the thing run away with them; and our sleepy old fellows who didn't know nothin' that a northern man would stop to put on a writing pad, and who had a lot of brush land which they would have traded for a blind horse, suddenly woke up and helped to make the new ideas shoot. My, how they sold that brush land for city lots, at Chicago prices. Men who couldn't get credit at the corner grocery for a box of soda crackers or a plug of tobacco suddenly began to swell around like millionaires, and people called them 'Colonel' or 'Judge.' Fortunately some of them knew enough to hold on to their money, and the other fellows held on to their lots; they couldn't let go.

"Awhile back Jack Dawes and me went over there about forty miles on a little hunting expedition; and when we were in a thick tangle of woods one afternoon, the dogs begun to whine and yelp as if they were gettin' heartsick. You know when a huntin'



dog sees a diamond rattler he don't proceed to embrace it, but begins to cry like a baby that wants its mother. So we thought of course, that the dogs had scented a big rattler; and we went through the brush careful like with our guns cocked, but we couldn't see no snake. Howsomever, we found one of those famous towns which was going to be, all laid out in streets and blocks—laid out for buryin'. Everybody who bought a lot there got bit, and you can believe me or not, Parson, but that is what ailed them dogs; they was plumb scared, afeard that they would get bit.

"I just sit down and thought about it; how a possum come out of a hole where the bank was to be, and a coon come down a tree where the city hall was to be; and a rabbit crept out of a nest where the Metropolitan hotel was to be, and all the other varmints from the boulevards come together, and some wise old owl called the meetin' to order, and then they passed resolutions of respect for the dead. We took off our hats, me and Jack, and walked softly until we got out of the cemetery.

"Do you know, Parson, it isn't good to know too much in a new country; it is apt to cause an attack of acute indigestion, isn't that what you call it?

"I know that a razor-back hog don't look as if he was good for nothin' but to cut through a thick fog on a heavy mornin'; but a native thinks if he has a poland china or a berkshire he will have to raise corn to raise the hog, and this is a hot country and there is plenty of the tired feelin'; and you don't have to raise nothin' to raise a razor-back hog. He raises hisself. They make a lot of fuss about our Florida cattle, but I am bound to say this for them—they keep the price of beef down, and that is a whole lot these days. Nobody is going to pay thirty cents



a pound for beeksteak when it costs forty cents worth of labor to chew it. A man at the hotel the other day swore at the waiter because he gave him a Florida steak. He said he would defy even Colonel Roosevelt to put his teeth through it. But these fellows who can't chew a Florida steak chew the rag all day. It isn't good citizenship. Preach on it, Parson, preach on it. And I want to tell you that when it comes to raisin' things in this neck of the woods, it is like raisin' bread, it takes the dough.

"But the people from the North are beginnin' to have more properer ideas about Florida. They begin to see that it was made for the fun of the thing. I never studied geography much; but when I look at the map it seems as if our state was what some of you fellows call an after thought, made up of left over material and hung on the rest of the country like a frill on a woman's coat, a kind of ornament spangled over with flowers and dangling with bird songs. It isn't best to work it too hard. It's a mighty good playground, Parson, mighty good. Yes, sir, the people have the correct idea, who make their money up North where the wind keeps them cool while they work and then come down here and get in the eye of the sun where the birds sing because they can't help it, and the flowers bloom because they can't help it, and the waters laugh because they can't help it.

"And, Parson, I don't want you to think that I am tryin' to flatter you, but my Lucy said you preached like you couldn't help it. We don't like things down here to cost much work. That's the reason we are all Democrats. If we had two big parties, we would have to work hard to carry an election; but when we are all Democrats an election carries itself. Old Andy Jackson made it dead easy for a lot of us; he



was a Democrat, and so are we. It would be a whole lot easier for you preachers, if everybody thought the same way. You wouldn't have to saw your way through a lot of first places and second places.

"And let me tell you another thing, Parson, it will be easier if you don't get too much north wind in your sermons. I have seen preachers come down here with a lot of imported air in their sermons, and pretty soon they got a frost. People didn't go to hear them. And don't take us too serious. We got along before the frost and we got along after it. Things don't stop because something happens. I have seen people wonder how the world could get along without a man, and a week after he was dead they began to forget what he did. Before an election all the stump orators are a declarin' that if we don't win, the world will turn turtle and we'll all be smashed, and the next day the groceryman asks you to pay your bill, just as if nothin' had happened.

"But say, Doctor, I wish you would tell us some Sunday when Before begins and when After ends; I feel a little scared about the hereafter."

"I thank you for the suggestion, Mr. Bamby, and for all this talk. I feel quite indebted to you."

"Never mind about that now, you can pay me some other time. I hear the train comin' and must hurry over to the station. So long."

And with a twinkle in his eye he was off, and I was saying to myself, "he does not use classical language, but he is pretty close to the common denominator."







### CHAPTER III.

#### SEX IN PREACHING.

“**Y**OU did not tell me much of the story between the days when I knew you as a little girl and now,” I said to Miss Kingsley when I called. “I should like to hear more of it. There is some difference between short dresses and all the long thinking which you seem to be doing about the universe. What was the evolution? What were you doing through the years?”

“I went the usual round,” she replied, “through high school, through the fret and fever of clothes, and then through college, and then through Europe as far as Rome, Venice, and Constantinople, with a six months’ stay in Germany. While there I made a little study of the German school system. And it is great. They know how to develop brain power. Human efficiency is their idea. I also heard the noted theologians as I had opportunity and as far as I could stretch my knowledge of German.”

“Did you hear the Socialist leaders?” I asked.

“Some of them, and I tried to learn what they were doing. Making society altogether lovely is a great thing, you know.”

“So it is, and I am interested in that subject; I should like to know what you found.”

“I found a troublesome ‘if.’ Socialism runs along smoothly until it comes to an if, and then there is a jolt. The fact is, Socialism was the theme of my



graduating talk, and that was when I first became acquainted with its troubles and had some trouble of my own with it. I thought I knew a good deal before I began to read up on the subject, and expected to brush away all the mists that society is muddling around in and settle the problem of human welfare. But when I got down all the books on the subject which I could find in the library and read and read, I always found myself standing at an If. If society would do right, or the church do better, or employers give up their greed, or some other people quit their meanness, then we would have social salvation and a new heaven on earth. Really I was in despair, and if I could have had two days more I would have dropped the subject and taken another theme, but I had come to the last night before commencement, and the clock was striking twelve and my head was aching. So I threw down the manuscript and slipped into bed to fight nightmares over the dreaded tomorrow. In the morning a happy idea struck me, and it let me out beautifully that day."

"What was it?" I asked eagerly.

"Why, when I came to that troublesome If I turned to the Stars and Stripes hanging at the side of the stage, and with passionate voice and outstretched arms I shouted its praises as the banner of hope for all. 'Oh, glorious flag!' I cried, 'the eternal sky gave thee its blue, eternal energy its red, eternal purity its white, and the stars of heaven came down to nestle in thy folds.' In my excitement my hair broke loose and fell down over my shoulders. But I just stood for a moment, with my eyes riveted on Old Glory, as if lost in wonder, love and praise. When I turned to take my seat the house shook with applause. Nobody had seen me sidestep the troublesome If. The flag dazzled them and saved the day for me."



"I wish I had been there to see you and to clap my hands. You must have made a picture. No doubt the crowd thought they had seen the Goddess of Liberty praising her own. But preachers can't look so angelic or be quite so artful."

"They can't!" she exclaimed. "Perhaps you do not see them as well from the pulpit as we do from the pews. There are preachers who can raise their eyes to heaven and look so angelic that if a poor little angel happened to be traveling through the church, he would want to run away and get some more heavenly plumage. And they can be artful, very. Haven't I heard them tearing the Four Gospels into shreds, and then near the close of their discourses burst into a glowing peroration in praise of the Master of the Gospels, just as if they had not tried to destroy every foundation of historical belief in Him?"

"Don't be too hard on the preachers."

"I won't. I love them," she laughed.

"But what I don't understand is, how you became so much interested in theology."

"Isn't it interesting?"

"To some men, but not usually to women, and you seem to take it much to heart."

"Why shouldn't I, being a woman? So far as there is a difference between the sexes in this respect, men think truth and women feel truth."

"Well, what is the difference in the long run?"

"Only this; that thinking gives form to truth, and feeling gives force to truth, and force is what produces effect, whether in mechanics or morals. Theories are dry life, convictions are living power."

"That is pretty good, but you must admit that men are greater discoverers of truth than women."

"Yes, I admit that men are the explorers, the hunters. I am not trying to belittle them. I am a



man booster, when I have time to spare from woman's troubles. But men are sometimes more interested in the hunt or the chase after truth than in the truth itself. You know what the German philosopher said, 'If I held truth, like a bird in my hand, I would open my hand and tell it to fly away that I might pursue and capture it again.' That kind of thing is the love of intellectual pleasure or excitement, not the love of truth."

"So it is, but without wishing to be personal, you seem to like to chase around with the theologians."

"Yes, I do, and my reason for it is somewhat personal. I told you the other day that our poverty was distressing when father was carrying that unproductive mine, but mother was distressed by the fear that if they struck ore in the mine and we became rich we would forget God. This distress increased as the prospect brightened. She talked very earnestly about it one evening, and papa said, 'Poor or rich I never shall turn my back on the church, nor give up my religion.' And he has not. Then mother went with me to my room and knelt down with me and prayed that I never would lose my faith, that her God would be my God. Her tears fell upon my face when she kissed me goodnight, and they baptised me into her faith forever. I do not care what they say or who comes or goes, I shall not give up the faith which made mother care more for my soul than for wealth. I know as I live that she would rather have lived in poverty to the end of her days than to have the love of money quench the love of God. This is very personal, but I tell it that you may understand me better. I am not simply speculating in theology because it is intellectually interesting; but I study it, think about it, talk about it in self-defense. I am determined to know how much there is in these at-



tacks which are made on my faith; and the more subtle they are, or the more scholarly they claim to be, the more determined I am to hunt them down to the weak point. For there always is a weak point somewhere. I do not deny that there is some intellectual pleasure in it, for it is an important contribution of a college girl's education that it prepares her for mental enjoyment, but the all important thing is that it gives my soul satisfaction. It keeps my mind and heart together. I can give a reason for the faith that is in me."

"I deeply appreciate this personal explanation," I said, "and I feel that your mother was a Hamilcar and you a Hannibal, but in a better cause. I don't wonder that you so bravely scaled the theological Alps. You ought to be a preacher, now that woman is at the front."

"I have seen Sundays when I wanted to preach about five minutes after a sermon, ended its dismal doubt. But I think preaching is a man's mission. Woman is climbing up, but I am not aching to see her climb the pulpit steps. There is a difference. A man is more concerned about what he will say when he appears in public; a woman is more concerned about how she will look. The last thing a man does before leaving his room is to run his talk over in his mind, but the last thing a woman does is to look into her mirror to see that her eyelashes are on straight.

"Besides, there is sex in preaching, sex in oratory, sex in mind. Man is made for the platform and the pulpit. He is the spokesman of the race."

"How so, don't women like to talk?"

"Yes, about a piece of news. But a man likes to talk about what he thinks. If he thinks a thought he wants to preach it out, or deliver a lecture or write



an article. If he thinks two or three more thoughts, he is seized with an irrepressible desire to write a book. But he may carry a piece of news around in his mind a week, as he does a letter in his pocket which his wife had given him to mail. But it is not in a woman to keep a piece of news out of circulation. It would burn a hole in her mind, just as money does in her pocket. She keeps news and currency in circulation. If she hears something she goes over to a neighbor or friend and tells it. Woman was born before newspapers, and it is certain that a real newspaper man is born of woman. Men call women gossips, and then stay at home from church to read the Sunday newspaper with its bundle of gossip big enough to make a bonfire. Funny, isn't it? The daily newspaper's immense popularity and influence are woman's justification as a circulator of the community's news or will be when she has used a scrubbing brush on it. But if a woman has a thought she can lock it up and say nothing. 'Mary pondered all these things in her heart.' Woman makes heart treasures of her thoughts, not speeches, nor sermons, nor books.

"So I say there is sex in preaching. For while the gospel is good news, it is a system of eternal truth, vast thoughts, great doctrines, just the things that man's mind likes to handle and to hand out to the world. A preacher who only tells stories has missed the main line. If a minister spends more time circulating in the neighborhood than in his study, his people begin to complain; they want ideas, great thoughts. There is a tireless machine running inside of the human head, and it takes an able-bodied man to feed the grist into the hopper."

"But woman is arriving in politics and on the campaign stump, what do you think of her there?"



"I think the same about her there that I do about her preaching. Politics is not a thing of today or tomorrow, but of long stretches of time. Rome was not built in a day, and our republic came out of the ages. Master minds gathered up the ideas of the past, the lessons of all the tragedies of the centuries, and thought them into a free government. But a woman does not think so much about these things; and if there is not a burning issue up, she loses interest in politics. At one election she turns out *en masse*; at the next election she stays at home and lets her party get turned out of power. You can't have a burning issue all the time, but we must have government all the time. Therefore I say that men are more likely to be the teachers and leaders of the future than women."

"Yes, but there is another side to this question," I replied. "The trouble with men, whether in the pulpit or on the platform, is what you mentioned a few minutes ago. They are apt to be more in love with their ideas and theories than with the people. They feel intellectual interest, not the human saving interest. I have to contend with it in myself all the time. Some critics complain that there are too many women teachers in our schools, but it is natural. A woman takes an interest in the child and wants knowledge to help it. The man teacher's interest is in the knowledge, and he teaches the children because he wants a place to put his knowledge. As soon as he thinks some other calling more interesting than putting knowledge into the minds of the young, he quits teaching."

"What you say reminds me of a pretty little poem I found in a newspaper the other day, and I liked it so well that I housed some of it in memory:



'If you put a little lovin' into all the work you do  
And a little bit of gladness, and a little bit of you,  
Then your work will be attractive, and the world will  
stop to look,  
And the world will see a sweetness, like the tinklin'  
of a brook,  
In the finished job; and then the world will turn to  
look at you  
With a world's appreciation of the thing you've found  
to do.'

"It is easy to give something out of the books, but what many a congregation is saying to its learned preacher is, 'Give us a little bit of you, something which is in your heart, which is coursing in your blood, something which your tears would tell if we knew your story!' A woman once wrote to Mrs. Clark, of the famous Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago, that she had saved her by a kiss. When Mrs. Clark asked her for an explanation, the woman replied that she was in the county hospital for a time, suffering from an injury. Mission workers called on her and talked to her, but made no impression. 'But when I saw you talking to a fallen girl of the street,' she wrote, 'a wretched creature, then praying with her and then bending over and kissing her, it just melted my heart.'

"When I read that sweet little story I wished that I could throw my arms around Mrs. Clark and kiss her. I know the angels will want to kiss her when she goes to heaven, and all the women she helped to redeem will kiss her. 'A little bit of you' is the very Christ of it. He gave Himself."

"I repeat my opinion," I said on rising to leave, "you would make a good preacher. Perhaps you will preach in that pulpit over there just to show the parsons how. Women have been known to change their minds."



"And men have been known to change their way of preaching," she added with a smile.

I had much reason afterward to remember my prophecy and her remark.







## CHAPTER IV.

### NEW ARRIVALS.

**M**Y SERMONS the next Sunday did not please Miss Kingsley, as I inferred from little signs and revelations. At the door of the church she looked at me wistfully, as if she thought I was good material going to waste or a battery burning itself out to make darkness. But the house was crowded, morning and evening, and that goes a long way with a preacher. People, people! What a hunger we have for people! There is no tragedy like the tragedy of empty pews. It is so serious when everybody seems to be dead on Sunday morning, and all swarmingly alive on Monday morning. On the way to the postoffice the next day I met Miss Kingsley with an open letter in her hand and a happy look on her face.

"There is such a good piece of news in this letter," she said, "that I must tell you about it. My cousin, Miss Susie Searcy, is coming to spend the rest of the season with us. She is a charming girl, and we think the world of her. I shall tell you more about her this afternoon."

I had been invited to take lunch at the Kingsleys' and an auto ride in the afternoon, and during the ride Miss Kingsley gave me a further introduction to her expected cousin. "Her mother has been dead for some years," she said, "and we often have the dear girl with us. We went to Europe together and our sum-



mer houses are at the same resort. She made a brilliant record in college, took the honors, and touched the high spots. I expect her to be quite an admirer of your sermons, for she is an advanced thinker."

"I am surprised to hear that," I said, "because I thought your whole connection solidly orthodox, clear out to the edges."

"Cousin was orthodox enough before going to college, but when she came home she had flung it all on the scrap heap, as she said. She thought it strange that we should have expected anything else. 'Why, don't you know,' she exclaimed, 'that all the girls in that college shed their old beliefs. They would feel like a country cousin coming to the city in a backwoods dress, if they did not shed them. The professors are modern, the college preachers are modern, the books added to the library are modern, and every nose around the institution is tipped at a modern angle. We are simply stuck on modern ideas. Baked beans are about the only old-fashioned thing allowed.

"'You think,' she went on, 'that you would hold out against it; but the fine scorn with which a professor withers an old belief, and the double-plated assurance of the progressive college preacher are too much for you. I have seen girls cry when the process first began, and letters from their mothers exhorted them to keep up their religious belief; but they get hardened to it and laugh it off. It is all a part of life, you know. If the old religion can't stand up against the new knowledge, it is not our fault. We are sent to college to be taught; and if that is what they teach us, why of course that is what we learn. We are going to school now, not a hundred or a thousand years ago, and the world do move.'

"'Mother shed some tears over it, but I told her that when there is a rush of new theology to a college



girl's head it takes time to moderate it; and so we have concluded to enjoy the happy Susie and ignore the theology."

The cousin came at the expected time, and if I had been making comparisons I should have called her one of the most beautiful girls I ever had seen. She had a wonderful charm of manner. The joy of life seemed to be hers. It was easy to see why the family thought the world of her and why she took honors in college, for she seemed irresistible, even to a hard problem in mathematics.

"I knew you would like her," said her cousin, some days later. But I was not sure that I felt pleased that Miss Kingsley was willing to have me like her so well, that is, very much. It was a shadowy feeling which started more questions than I wanted to consider.

But I felt a little bit relieved when a letter came from my old classmate and chum, Don Dinsmore, saying that he was going to join me at the Florida resort. "A blizzard is raging here," he wrote, "and it makes the streets between the skyscrapers look like canyons when a snowstorm is driving through the mountains. Me for Florida." I thought his coming would make a diversion or at least put a triangle on the square. And I must confess that I felt I might be of some assistance to fate in bringing so promising a young man and so brilliant a girl where the paths meet. It seems strange to me now that I had the assurance to think that I could weave the web between two lives. We can watch the weaver at his loom and see the threads of white and blue and red go here and there and at last the figure come true to the pattern. But the human brain, darting its thoughts through light or darkness, changing the invisible into the most visible, filling the empty with the



real, and turning all things into myriad forms, while the heart throws all colors and all shapes into the web which the brain weaves, who can tell what the product will be?

I soon discovered that mixing with matters of fate has some surprises, that unexpected factors may come around a corner and queer the situation. My first surprise came when Miss Searcy told me that they had already met my friend Dinsmore. "We met him on the steamer coming back from Europe," she said. "Did you mention our names when you wrote him," she asked. "Yes, I think so," I replied. She looked away into the distance and said nothing.

My next surprise came in discovering an engagement ring on Miss Searcy's finger. Then I began to realize that the Fates did not need any assistance from me, that they were on the job before I started down their way.

After Dinsmore's arrival there was still another surprise for me. He had not been at the resort a week until he began to be uneasy, restless, moody.

"What is the matter, Dinsmore?" I asked.

"I don't know," he replied, "unless it is the Florida climate."

"Climate nothing! You act as if the wires were crossed or short-circuited or something that way. Out with it, old man, and let's understand one another. You are not getting your money's worth out of the sunshine or the scenery."

"There is too much scenery for my comfort," he replied. "The last thing Daddy did when I was leaving home was to tell me not to get tangled up down here. 'Two of the young men in our house went down there last year,' he said, 'and came back engaged. I don't want you to be engaged. You are not far enough along in business. Living is too high, and



the young women of your set are too high up in the air to keep the supports under them without a lot of prosperity. "Everybody works but father!" What a joke! No, Don, don't be rash. Don't expose yourself, keep out of the moonlight. Keep off the river banks when the waters are laughing. Don't sit under moss-covered trees or among the blooming oleanders when the mocking-birds are singing. Blast the blooming things down there, anyhow! Freeze 'em cold, Don, freeze 'em. It was on the Indian River that the fellows got it last year. It is a dangerous stream. Keep off its banks.'"

"The governor was scared, sure," I said, "and I don't wonder that you are scared, but brace up. Keep out of the moonlight. You seem to be poking around in it every night. Cut it out."

"No, I am going to light out, and that right away. He who runs away may come back to marry some other day. I am off."

"Oh, no, you are not. Your kind of a mood does not last long. Get a better grip on the situation."

"It is the situation that I don't like. One girl has an engagement ring on her finger and the other an impenetrable look on her face, and where would I be if cupid and the climate and the whisper of the winds got in their work on me? I don't think the engagement ring fits very tight, and I have noticed a troubled expression on her face when she looks at it, but that may only mean more trouble when it comes to a show down. Safety first, is my motto."

"But you can't go now; you have not seen the orange trees in bloom and they make the country look like a bridal procession."

"I don't need to wait for that. I had a dream the other night, and it was full of orange blossoms. They were all over the room, out in the hall, down



the path, and I was wading through them to church with a blooming young lady on my arm who was covered with orange blossoms; and we went into a bower of orange branches, and a fresh young minister stood up and made some flowery remarks about the tie which ties a man up for better or worse. There is a warning in dreams, and I feel warned. Tomorrow noon the flyer will whisk me away where the winds whistle and the birds don't sing."

"No, not tomorrow, for you know that is the day set for the big swim on the peninsula, the dip in the sea."

"I had forgotten that. I'll wait."

"Good. You need to be soaked in salt water."

There was more on Dinsmore's mind in this matter than the conversation revealed, and it was my painful privilege to discover the fact later on.

During that evening there was a sensation at the river front which attracted crowds of spectators. A cool wind had come down from the north and ruffled the waters and caused them to flash with phosphorescent light, so that the river looked like a flame of fire as far as the eye could see. It seemed so real that the occupants of a house projecting over the water fled from the building, fearing that it was about to catch fire.

I asked Bob Bamby, who was somewhat excited by the spectacle, how it made him feel. "It makes me feel like an old sinner," he replied. "I used to think when I heard a hot sermon that I would like to jump into the river and get cool; but if the Lord can set the river on fire, he can set the world on fire, and then where would us old chaps get off?"

"Do you know how it made me feel?" said Don.

"I presume it made you think that you would have



missed seeing something if you had gone home before it happened."

"No, it made me think that something is going to happen to me if I stay, and the river seems to be mixed up in it. This thing tonight got on my nerves."

"Go to bed and sleep it off your nerves; you will be all right in the morning."

"What did it make you think?" asked Don:

"It made me think that nature is sensational."

"It got in the limelight tonight in this neck of the woods, all right. But, of course, if nature is sensational, you think that a preacher has a right to be sensational and indulge in a lot of pyrotechnics in the pulpit?"

"No, not quite, but I do think that a preacher has a right to be a sensation if he is big enough."

"Not sensational, but a sensation! That is a nice distinction, more comfortable to the celebrities than to the crowd. But here come the young ladies. I should like to know what they think about it."

"It made me think that we cannot trust the surface," said Miss Searcy. "What a glow and flame the river did set up, and down below the waters were just the same as ever. That is the way with people. They burst into a flame of fine sentiment because they think it the proper thing, and underneath they are the same old human natures, cold, selfish, sordid. What did you think, Ethel?"

"A river," she replied, "always makes me think of time—'Down the river of time we glide'—and when I saw the beautiful river of which we are so proud putting up that grand illusion or phantasm, it seemed an illustration of what the twentieth century now appears to have done to us. It came in with all the bells ringing, all the writers boasting, and all the pulpits and platforms proclaiming the Twentieth Century



Civilization as the greatest thing ever. And now where are we? Don't we know that much of it was only surface seeming, that underneath were reactionary currents, human tides hardly touched by real progress, dead waters, depths which moral regeneration had not reached. Don't call me pessimistic if I say that it is difficult to escape the conclusion that time was handing us out a reactionary century, and we did not know it."

"But it is a long way yet to the end of the hundred years," I said, "and the century may make good before it quits."

"Certainly, and we shall have to buckle down and help it to make good."



## CHAPTER V.

### A DAY OF DANGER.

Oh, thou vast ocean, ever sounding sea,  
Thou symbol of a drear immensity,  
Thy voice is like the thunder, and thy sleep  
Is a Giant's slumber, loud and deep.  
Oh, wonderful thou art, great element,  
And fearful in thy spleeny humors bent,  
And lovely in repose; thy summer form  
Is beautiful.

**H**OW well the poet said it. The sea can be so beautiful and so terrible, such a shout of many voices calling to heaven, and such a gulf of death, calling to the demons of despair!

The beach on the peninsula was broad and beautiful and strewn with many colored shells, a famous driveway for automobiles, with its long level of hard sand and the waters gleaming in the sunlight, reaching to far off shores of other lands.

A throng had gathered as we appeared upon the scene, and the air was ringing with shouts of delight. But there were long swells and breakers were beginning to tumble across an in-coming tide.

When we were all ready for the plunge, Miss Kingsley exclaimed, "There comes Bob with a long rope in his hand; what is he carrying that around after us for?" But Bob was muttering to himself: "They don't know this treacherous old coast as I do. Didn't I see that young man carried out to doom last year and a hundred people stood here wringing their hands and lookin' at him?"



The young women had taken swimming lessons as part of their athletics in college, and with practice at the summer resorts had become experts in the water. Don and myself had begun the business in the old swimming pool when we were boys and felt pretty sure of ourselves in an ordinary sea, but the heavy swells which were driving against the beach had an alarming aspect.

"Let us give the mariner's salute," said Miss Searcy, and with a wave of her hand toward the great ocean she repeated the lines:

"The sea, the sea, the open sea,  
The blue, the fresh, the ever free;  
Without a mark, without a bound,  
It runneth the earth's wide regions round.  
I love, oh, how I love to lie  
On the wide resistless tide."

For a little while the waters tried to behave themselves and give us a chance; but their boisterous spirit was too much for them, and the spectators on the shore began to shout, "Be careful, be careful!" The tide is rising. Come nearer shore." The two cousins sensed the danger and started for the beach, but a young girl near them began to scream and they went to her assistance. While helping her to safety, a big breaker struck them and threw Miss Searcy far to one side, but carried the other two near the beach and they reached the shore.

The back action of another swell swept Miss Searcy further out, and she was now in great peril. It was in vain that she plunged through the crest or swam across the slanting waters. Every stroke only left her further out at sea. I struggled hard to reach her, but was carried further away and nearer shore. Dinsmore was more successful and finally grasped her when exhausted and sinking. But it was a battle



with despair. They were like straws on the mad waters, and seemed lost. Then there was a great shout on the beach. Bob Bamby had rushed into the surf, and with a mighty swing of his arm and a loud cry he flung the rope far out to the helpless swimmers. Dinsmore threw himself toward the rope, caught it, and with the other hand grasping his companion he held fast to both while a score of hands drew them quickly to the beach.

Women wept for joy as they took the half-conscious girl in their arms, and strong men were wiping their eyes. "It was the narrowest escape that ever I have seen on this edge of the sea," said an old fisherman.

On the way home I said to Dinsmore, "Now you see why your departure for the north was delayed. Providence wanted to use you to save that splendid young woman's life." And the thought also came to me that this might be another case of a hero saving his own.

The next day Bob Bamby rushed into his house exclaiming, "Lucy, Lucy, look here! See what Col. Kingsley gave me—a hundred dollar check. A hundred dollars, because I threw that rope and saved his niece, with the young man thrown in."

"My, Bob, wasn't that nice! A whole hundred dollars! I wish you could throw a rope like that every day. We'd move into a bigger house."

"So do I, Lucy. No I'll take that back. I don't never want to throw a rope like that again. It was awful, awful, Lucy, to see them young people struggling and both just ready to go down forever. I wouldn't see it again for hundreds and hundreds of dollars."

"But what are you going to do with all that money, Bob? You won't fool it away, will you?"



"No, Lucy, I am going to divide with you and make it fifty-fifty. It'll buy your new hats the rest of your life."

Bob kept his word far enough to hand Lucy the fifty, but that night as the train was pulling out for the North he slipped aboard and went up to Jacksonville. When he came back his money was gone, and he looked as if he had been through the war.

At our next mid-week meeting we had a little thrill. In my remarks I had talked educational religion and criticised evangelists and revivals. After I sat down the air seemed rather chilly and the dead silence was becoming painful, when a good strong voice in the back of the room broke out with the hymn,

"Throw out the life line, throw out the life line,  
Some one is sinking today."

They all took it up and sang it with tears in their voices. The moment they stopped a man was on his feet, saying, "I am from Chicago, and I was an awful sinner, down and out, until I went into the Pacific Garden Mission one night, where they preach the old gospel and have a revival all the year round. I was saved, bless the Lord.

"The brother believes in education. So do I, as far as it goes. But education generally goes to the head, not to the heart. I found that out to my sorrow, for I graduated from college, and then went to the devil. People thought I was awfully smart, and I got to thinking myself that I could outwit the Ten Commandments and go my own pace and get away with it. I did. I got into the ditch, and then nobody thought I was smart. I was a shining light in the slums, but the shine was all on my clothes. I



felt like a capitalist after I had begged a quarter and got drunk, but like an outcast when I sobered up. I wanted to die and I wanted to live, and I couldn't do both. It is an awful feeling to have.

"Then Harry Monroe got his arm around me and called me brother. It was a new thing for me, and went down where there was still a little something in me; and when he told me that Jesus Christ could make a new man of me, I believed and was changed. It is a glorious gospel, and a great salvation.

"Education could not save the young woman who was about to perish in the sea. She had been taught to swim, taught by an athletic expert, but the sea was too much for her, that swirling, awful, rolling sea. Life is too dangerous a sea for education alone to make us safe. Oh the folly of thinking that you can put a generation of young people through the schools and then turn them out into a world where every kind of a wind is blowing, and currents and under currents are making madness, and still all will be well! All will not be well, unless you let Almighty God take a hand in it.

"They say that they don't believe in revivals because they stir up the emotions. I used to get off that kind of stuff myself, and then I would go to a theatre and laugh and cry over a play that stirred my emotions. And a lot of other people were there who didn't believe in evangelists, but did believe in passion plays. How they do blubber over an imaginary sinner and then scoff and fuss because somebody prays with tears in his voice for the real sinner. 'Cant in revivals!' There is more cant against revivals than you could chase down in an age. The church which is as cold as an ice house is afraid of a revival, afraid it might melt the ice. Preachers who read nice little essays that would make good non-conductors to wrap



around electric wires are afraid of excitement. Is it any wonder that the pastor of a great aristocratic church said to his brethren, 'We are exhausted batteries.'

"I don't want to overdo what I am saying, but I think it would do some pulpits good to be struck by thunder and lightning."

I told the brother to come again with another charge of thunder and lightning, and the people sang the closing hymn with great fervor.



## CHAPTER VI.

### A ROMANCE WITH A MISSING LINK.

I pass like night from land to land,  
I have strange power of speech,  
That moment that his face I see  
I know the man that must hear me.

Oh, wedding guest, this soul hath been  
Alone on a wide, wide sea.  
So lonely 'twas that God himself  
Scarce seemed to be.

“**I** WANT to have a talk with you, Mr. Liddon,” said Miss Searcy as she was passing out of church the next Sunday. “Can you call tomorrow afternoon?”

I made the call, with the following development:

“I feel troubled,” said Miss Searcy in beginning the conversation.”

“You ought to feel glad,” I interrupted.

“So I should, and so I do; but matters get mixed in life, and a little accident may have more than a little connection with something else. I escaped with my life from that peril in the sea, but my engagement ring slipped off my finger and is now at the bottom of the ocean. The loss of the ring itself is not serious, but what troubles me is that it had slipped off my heart before it slipped off my finger. I know this is a rather delicate matter to talk about with a young man, but professionally you are supposed to be as old as the seers and wise as the sages and you can forget your youth and remember your calling.”



"Well, I'll forget and remember. Go on if you think I can be of any assistance to you."

"As I said, the ring came off easily, for it never had really been on my heart. I was holding it at arm's length. To make the story short, we both were seniors in college, and you know how wise seniors can be. So we said that we did not believe in spoony love nor moonstruck romance. We kept out of the moonlight and read together, read philosophical treatises on the subject, psychology and all that. We talked over our ideals, the ideal man and the ideal woman, the ideal husband and the ideal wife. In fact I got my head so full of ideal notions that I could feel them coming out at night and dancing on my forehead like little spooks. But mind you, there had been no avowal on either side. And when matters had about reached the limit along the ideal route the young man burst into a little confidential declaration that I was his ideal. I was seized with a corresponding fit of confidential admission and replied that he measured up to my ideal, and perhaps something over."

"Then what?"

"Nothing but awkward silence," she replied with an amused look. "We were conducting the affair along philosophical lines, you know, and we sat for a few minutes like Grecian statues or wax figures along a wall. Neither of us seemed to know what to say or to do next. When the silence was becoming embarrassing he got up and took his departure, remarking that he would see me later."

"Now I know that it all was so wise that it was not wise at all. It was a high and lofty performance, a sixteen-story affair, with the old story left out, all head and no heart. And a love affair can not be worked that way. We can't put the beauty of a



magnolia flower into an algebraic equation, nor measure the song of a mocking bird with a foot rule, nor catch the blue of the sea in a pint cup. And so it is with love. It does not go by rule nor cut and dried philosophy. Young men and women meet one another and there is no love. Then suddenly a young man and woman look into each other's eyes, and their hearts are aglow. The young man had his ideal before he met her—he was going to marry a blonde, but she is a brunette. She was going to marry a tall man, but he is a short one. And so it goes, ideals scatter when love flashes. I know that the head ought to have something to do with such affairs, but if you shut out the heart there is sure to be trouble. Sometimes I wish that I did not have a heart, it can ache so. People think that I am always happy—they don't know how utterly wretched I have been when I looked at that misplaced ring. I want to keep my word, but I do not want to keep my heart in cold storage. They call me beautiful, as if that was everything. I am getting tired of it. Sometimes I wish that my mirror would make faces at me, turn up its nose at me. Actually I envied a homely girl whom I met on the street the other day. She can live a more natural life than I can. It is not easy to keep your poise when you overhear people saying to one another at social functions, 'Isn't she beautiful, isn't she beautiful!' I am not a movie, a picture show. Womanhood must have a soul or it is not womanhood.

"We have reversed the order of nature. Out there it is the male bird which puts on the gay plumage and is beautiful. The female bird is plain, dresses in drab. But women put on fine feathers, ribbons and colors. It is half of her existence. I tell you, Mr. Liddon, it is bad for her and the rest of the world. It makes trouble, heart tragedies."



"Yes, but the Creator loves the beautiful," I said; "He makes the flowers and the colors in the rainbow."

"I know it is so, but we can't live on flowers, and chasing rainbows is disappointing. We put flowers in the center of the table to look at, we can't eat them. The Master had so much to say about the bread of life, the water of life. We must have bread to feed our hunger, water to quench our thirst. Our bodies must be fed clear out to the last little cell. Starve a muscle and there is disease. Starve a nerve and there is a case for a doctor. And it is so with our hearts and souls. A woman's heart must be fed."

"Why confine the remark to woman? Man has a heart, too."

"I presume he does, but I am talking about my troubles, and you know that the modern preachers are making so much of intellectual lines. We are both advanced thinkers, but this mistaken love affair of mine, with its cool, critical method, makes me feel some misgivings about my religious theories. For Christianity is God's great love affair with the human kind—'God so loved the world.' It can't be reduced to mathematics. It cannot be all sized up or sized down by the rules of criticism, higher or lower. It is not a philosophy nor a psychology. It is a love affair. Men and women fall in love with one another because they are made that way. Say the same thing about God and humanity, and you have said the most important thing that can be said about religion."

"But your love affair is what has given you trouble."

"It has, because there was a missing link—there was no love in it, and that is the trouble with a good deal of religion. There is a missing link, and it is not to be found in the fossils and bones of a dead



world. A scientist goes poking around in geological strata for what he calls the missing link. He could throw down his pick and spade and find a missing link in his own heart. Professors in the schools and preachers in the pulpits try to link us to the animal world. What we need is to be linked to God."

"Yes, but when you say that you are not living up to your reputation for being one of the most brilliant skeptics that ever was in your college."

"Brilliant nothing! It was only borrowed and only in my head. Now I have a heart trouble, and when my heart aches I seem to hear that wonderful voice speaking to me, which said, 'Let not your heart be troubled.' He did not waste time on stacks of stuff which are only words. He went straight to the spot."

Here she broke down and sobbed.

When she had recovered, I said to her, "If you hear that voice you do not need to hear my voice. 'He spake as never man spake.'"

"But what shall I do with my engagement with the young man?"

"Explain to him that you want to call it off because it never was on. Nobody can say anything wiser than that."

"But I do not want to be thought fickle or disloyal."

"No, but there is another kind of loyalty at stake, loyalty to the truth of the matter. The truth is that you made a mistake, that you do not love the young man. That is something which you seem unable to change. The engagement is something which can be changed, if the young man is reasonable. You have the right to ask him to release you."

She sent her explanation and request for a release to the young man, and he promptly released her.



After I went back to my room I took up a book but could not read. That word, "a missing link," kept tramping up and down my thoughts all the time. I thought of the great Wellington, mighty general, but in the morning his boys were told to pass into his library; he said, "good morning," and they passed out. There was a missing link. Napoleon burst into tears when he saw a dog wailing at the side of his dead master on the field of battle. He felt very sorry for the dog, but he shed no tears over the myriads of men slain in his campaigns. There was a missing link. Charles Sumner delivered masterly orations in the campaign for the freedom of the slave, but he had no interest in individuals. There was a missing link. I thought of the sermons which are brilliant, but there is a missing link, of the homes which would be happy but for a missing link, of the reforms which would lift society, but there is a missing link. We heat the iron, we smite it on the anvil; but when we look at the chain, a link which we need is not there. As the troubled young woman said, why look for a missing link among the fossils in clay and rock, when there are so many missing links where life throbs, hearts bleed, and souls cry.



## CHAPTER VII.

### TO BE OR NOT TO BE A BACHELOR.

**D**ON DINSMORE'S determination to depart and break the spell which he feared might interfere with his program of business weakened. He lingered and continued to linger. I also lingered. When my month was up, I wrote to the church officials that I saw an opportunity to achieve some important results by a further stay. I did not specify what they were, and I doubt whether I could have furnished a bill of particulars to myself. Don said that he found it good for his health to remain. I replied, "So it is, Don, but the plain English of it is that you are in love." "I do not plead guilty to the indictment," he replied, "but what if I am? It is an old human right and there is special reason for it with such charming attractions close at hand."

"Then why don't you move on the works?"

"Because I might lose out. You can't always tell what the other party will do. Men have suffered painful surprises as the result of over-confidence. Moreover I am not sure that I should be among the fortunate class who find themselves 'happy though married.'"

"Don't get off that kind of talk. That will do for men in a club, blowing wreaths of tobacco smoke around the room, men from whom the world has nothing much to expect and cares little to respect. They ought to go away off and build a city for themselves, a city without residence districts, without long streets lined



with happy homes where mothers stand on the porch and watch with loving look the boys and girls hurrying away to school, where little children run down the walk to meet daddy and lead him into the house and to the waiting supper. A city where there would be only bachelor lodging houses, ten stories high, sixteen stories high—the more bachelors the more stories. Houses full of bachelors, young bachelors, old bachelors, bald-headed bachelors; bachelors who grumbled when they went upstairs and when they came downstairs, who knocked the weather man when the sun shone and when it rained; jolly bachelors who never saved a dollar and never paid back a dollar that they borrowed; bachelors who did not know when night ended nor when morning began and who fumbled around the keyhole in the other man's door; bachelors with the knot in their necktie under their ear, and a pant leg in a boot top; bachelors with the buttons all gone and their clothes held together with safety pins; bachelors with the dust of ages on their coats, their shoes unblackened, their faces unshaven, and hair uncombed; bachelors throwing themselves out of the windows because life was not worth living. Wouldn't that be a happy town?"

"Let me get out of here quick," exclaimed Don, "before I fall over dead."

"No, hear me to the end, you sinner. Two Presidents of the United States entered the White House as bachelors. One repented, humbled himself at the altar, and an angel came and touched his lips with a live coal from the lips of love; and he uttered wise sayings which the people passed along, and they gave him a second term. The other bachelor was impenitent, obdurate, and hardened his heart more and more. He was not re-elected, could not be. Moreover the Union began to dissolve before his term was up, or rather, was down, for it was all down. He did not know anything about unions.



He was a solitaire with no shine in him, the most unfortunate happening in the history of the White House. A man with a domestic habit and matrimonial experience might have prevented the dissolution of the Union. After his election and before his inauguration General Jackson's wife died of a broken heart, because they had abused Old Hickory so badly in the campaign. His wife's death made him mad through and through, and when Southern leaders began to stir up a racket and talk dissolution of the Union he got out a big stick and reduced the rebellious members of the household to order. The family is the unit of the state, and there can not be a United States without it. Therefore why resist the impulse to enter the state of matrimony?"

"But why do you resist it yourself? You are as old as I am and wiser, and away up in your calling."

"Perhaps it is because I have not fallen in love."

"I think you would not have very far to fall if you let go, judging from what I have seen down here."

Just then the telephone bell rang, and when I was through with it Dinsmore stood at the window. After a few minutes he said, "There is a couple out in front who make life miserable for each other. I never pass them that they are not spatting about money or something. What would you do if you had a wife who was always nagging you for money?"

I would reason with her, tell her that every establishment must have a treasurer or it would soon go bankrupt. There has got to be somebody to hold fast to the money. Even a two-billion-dollar Congress has its watch dog of the Treasury."

"Yes, I know that," he replied, "but some men are doggoned mean to their wives and children. When I see how free with their money some fellows are while they are courting their girls and then see what mean tightwads they are after the honeymoon, I feel that they



ought to be prosecuted for getting goods under false pretenses."

"You are right, and when I see how very nice some girls are before marriage, too sweet for anything, and then see what sulky mopes they are after marriage, I think they should be proceeded against for passing counterfeit currency."

"What would you say to a woman if she wanted to buy all the time? That is what seems to be the matter with this couple in front. The man complains that the woman is always wanting to buy, buy."

"I suppose he does not want to buy; men don't. Oh, no. A man becomes a millionaire in the oil business, and then he buys up all the other oil wells. He becomes a multi-millionaire, and he buys copper mines, coal mines, railroads, factories, banks, everything. He would buy the Milky Way if it were not so high, and mark up the price of milk and butter. If the goods are not on the bargain counter, he makes a bargain by manipulating the market and starting a panic. But if a woman rushes off to buy a remnant for 29 cents or a pair of stockings for half price, he wants to know why women have such a mania for buying things. When women can buy houses and lands as men do they will not run the rounds of the stores buying a spool of thread in one and a paper of hairpins in another. Buying is not woman's passion alone, it is the human passion. Possession is the mighty objective. Honest men pay for the goods, thieves steal them, and so do nations. America is about the only country that ever paid another people for land. The other nations made war and took territory by force. It is to woman's credit that she would rather buy at a bargain than to take by force."

"Let us get back to things present. What would you do if the girl you had in mind was all for the world and did not want to try to go to heaven, and you did not



want to go to the other place. Where would we go?"

"Go on a honeymoon, of course, and after that you could work it out between you whether you would make your home a heaven or a hades."

"Then heaven and hell are not original propositions but states which we makes up ourselves."

"Well, a lot of people work pretty hard on the latter proposition."

"Sure they do. But what if the girl was too much of the other kind and wanted to go to church as regularly as the bell rang, while you wanted to stay at home and read the Sunday newspapers

"In that case I should reason with myself, not with her. I should say to myself, what shall it profit a man to fill his mind with all manner of stuff and let his soul go lean and hungry? to read how Corbett whipped Sullivan, or Smith eloped with Brown's wife, or another Chicago woman murdered another Chicago man, or a New Yorker stole a million and hurried off to Europe for his health; when he could go to church and get in touch with the mind of God and see visions which reach as far as destiny. I tell you, Don, the woman who hears the church bell ring has the best of it. We want fresh air for the body; she wants a fresh breeze for her soul. We like to go up into the mountains and look across the ranges of hills. She goes up into the Mount of God and sees the land which is far away. It lifts her up all the week. She feels that she is living for eternity. Last summer I was up in Maine for my vacation; and they told me about a woman who had lived in the community, but became insane and then died. After the funeral her husband said he didn't know why Mary Ann took crazy, for to his knowledge she had not been out of the kitchen for twenty years. Not out of the kitchen for twenty years, and he didn't know why she took crazy! Isn't going to church better than going crazy?"



“What a defender of woman you are! Why don’t you preach a sermon about it?”

“If I were a married man I could, but being a single man the congregation would go out of church saying, ‘He has it bad. I wonder who the girl is?’ Then they would begin to whisper, ‘I know who she is; I saw him look her way three times in two seconds.’ ”

“Ha, Ha! I will watch you myself now.”



## CHAPTER VIII.

### A HINT TO FIRE UP.

“**I** AM glad the parson knocked out that hot hereafter which you’ve been shaking at me.”

It was Bob, talking to Lucy in loud tones in the midst of a family jar.

“Yes,” she snapped back, “you fellows who go fishing while your wives are washing for the neighbors and who spend your money in the saloons and never have none to buy us a new dress, you like to have them elegant, patent leather, new-fangled preachers come down here and throw cold water on all the hot texts in the Bible. I tell, you Bob Bamby, I don’t like it. I wish they would stay up there until they get so froze up they couldn’t do without a fire. But I want you to understand right here and now, Bob, that if the preachers don’t make it hot for you, I will. You’ll never catch me starching up your shirt to go and hear him preach again. You bet I won’t”

“Humph’, Humph’, I don’t need to hear any more. If it’s all the same in the hereafter whether I go fishing or go to church on Sunday, or whether I drink whisky or drink water, I’ll take the fishing and the whisky, and don’t you forget it.”

“I won’t, and you won’t forget it either, what you’ll get the next time you come home drunk.”

“I promise you I’ll be good, Lucy. I’ll never touch the cussed stuff again, and I’ll tell the parson to put more sulphur in his sermons. It will help to brace me



up. I'll say to him kind of easy like that his preachin' is all right for them nice young women, but not penetratin' enough for a tough old customer like me. It is too weak for my nerves."

"And I'll starch your shirt again, Bob, and get you a nice new necktie, and make you look like one of them fellows that comes down from New York."

"That was a good one on you, Liddon," said Don, who also had overheard the racket.

The next day when I was out walking, a lady came down her steps as she saw me approaching and asked me if I could spare a few minutes, while she talked to me about a matter of some concern to herself.

"I greatly admire your preaching, Mr. Liddon," she said, after we were seated in the parlor. "It is full of new, fresh thought, not the old humdrum patter, patter. But a man has come to this resort whom I knew before I was married, in fact we were much interested in one another. But changes in habitation and some other things separated us and I married another man. My old friend has come here, I don't know just why. I hope it was not because he had learned that I was here. I don't know, I say. Only I do think that he does not seem to be fully aware that we can't be to each other as we once were, that there is a gulf fixed. And what is worse, I don't feel quite so sure of myself as I did before he came. This is frank, but it troubles me, and I am talking to you as a minister. There might have been more romance in my marriage I admit, but my husband is a respectable man, and I won't tolerate that affinity stuff that we read about in the fiction of the day and in the newspapers, too. Affinity is only another name for wayward affections. There are men and women in high life who ought to be locked up for vagrancy, vagrancy of the affections. No, none of that for me. And yet I find that my resolutions are not as strong as they were.



I need bracing up. Sometimes I wish I could hear a sermon which would scare the wits out of me. This may sound rude or crude to you, but it expresses my feelings. And there are others. Women not well mated, and siren voices whispering through the leaves of the literature of the day, and whispering in their own hearts. They do so much need bracing up preaching. Nothing is worse for them than to explain away the warning lights which the Bible has hung along the path of life, or to soften down the thunder which roars along the slippery hillsides. Let them scoff at Jonathan Edwards' sermon on 'Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God,' but I tell you that there are men who need to be in the hands of an angry God. It is better to shake men over hell than to have them sending girls and women down to perdition.

"Now here is a personal word, and I hope you will forgive me if I offend you. It is this, your sermons do not seem to strengthen my resolution. I come away admiring them, but my feet do not seem to be on such firm ground as they used to be. I wish you would preach a great, rousing sermon on sin, something which would make one feel as if steel rods had been put in their determination. I tell you, Mr. Liddon, we need protecting, we need fortresses to run to when we sense danger; and if the church is not our fortress, where will we find one? If the pulpit does not have a warning, strengthening voice, why should tempted mortals be in the pews?"

The next Sunday I missed the lady from the congregation, and on inquiry I was told that she had suddenly packed up and left the resort, remarking to a friend that she wanted to get back to her husband and her old pastor.

The interview disturbed me and I began to ask myself whether my preaching was bracing people up or taking the props out from under them.



"You have been in a brown study all evening," said Dinsmore. "What is the matter?"

"I have been wondering what a preacher is in the world for," I replied.

"I have felt the same kind of wonder, myself, at various times," remarked Don. "I know what a lawyer is here for, to go to the legislature and make laws; and then come home and tell judges and juries what the laws don't mean, and dispute with other lawyers as to what they do mean; and get paid for it a coming and a going. That seems puzzling enough; but it is mild compared with some phases presented by the ministry of the day."

"Certainly, because law only puts the lid on, but a minister, like young Watt, has to know why the lid is knocked off, and he has to turn human energies and passions into a power for good. His calling is as complicated as human life and as high and low as moral possibility."

"I know it, and sometimes I almost tremble when I see a preacher rise to begin his sermon. There is many a moral tragedy fighting its little battle in the hearts of the people whom he addresses, and he can so easily give the wrong turn to the lever. If a man or a woman is near the edge of a precipice a little mistake may send them over."

"What would you do with this talk of making preaching hotter against sin?" I asked.

"If the situation seemed to demand it, I should turn on the heat. It surely is in the Bible, and fear is a fundamental element of life. It is an instinct of self-preservation. Whenever there is danger there must be fear or the danger will undo us. Fear warns us to run or resist or save ourselves by whatever way is possible. It is a radical mistake for a minister to think that he can ignore so fundamental a fact as fear. It would be amusing if it were not otherwise, to see how bravely some



ministers can preach against fear in the pulpit and how constantly they are controlled by it in the ordinary relations of life. Fear, I say, is human, and if preaching is human business you cannot ignore fear. It is only the superhuman that finally can cast out fear."

"That sounds theological enough. Where did you get it?"

"I was raised on it."

"You mean that some welts were raised on your back?"

"No, Liddon, I never had any of those dreadful interviews with my father which some men so fondly remember, and my mother never licked me because she loved me. But every Sunday afternoon she took us through one of those Old Testament stories in which fear and hope and danger and deliverance play such great parts, and the lessons stuck to me through the week. And this reminds me that those stories have propped up a lot of boys, propped them up until they could stand on the strong legs of good men. I don't like the way some preachers are knocking out those props now. Business is pretty full of trouble and tight places these days, and the religious man is braced up by thinking that the Lord helps. But if he has been holding on by his teeth through the week and then goes to church on Sunday to be told that the Lord did not deliver Daniel from the Lions' Den or take care of Joseph down in Egypt, the effect is not good for his moral health. It does not reinforce his moral courage. He sees that whatever else these attacks on the historical facts may mean, down underneath is a denial of the supernatural, an elimination of Divine assistance in the affairs of life. Of course such a story as that of Jonah presents difficulties, but they are small compared with the difficulty of living a religious life on a basis of no Divine help. It must have been far less difficult for a



whale to swallow Jonah than it is to swallow the Bible after the critics are through with it."

"But what if the critics have the facts and the other people do not?"

"The critics have the facts as they think they ought to have been, not as history says they were. They sit down in their studies and make history after a theory. It is like pouring clear water into a glass and calling that history, when in fact muddy streams, overflowing rivers poured turbid and tawny waters into the great currents and tides which washed the shores of time and flooded and littered them with wrecks and debris and drift. Criticism is idealism; life is realism."

"That sounds smart. Where did you get it?"

"By rubbing up against it."



## CHAPTER IX.

### THE BEAUTY SPOT OF AMERICA.

A JOLLY man of the world who had just come up the coast and was stopping at the hotel said to me: "Have you ever been at Palm Beach? It is great. I advise you to see it and see it soon, for life is uncertain. You can get a room at the Royal Poinciana for a hundred dollars a day, and up," he added with a chuckle. "Take a barrel of money with you, break in the head and have a good time. You can eat, drink, and be sober—when the clerk presents the bill. The people down there have nothing to do but dress for the golf-ground, dress again for the 11 o'clock dip in the sea, and again for the 4 o'clock tea under the cocoanut trees, and again for dinner, and then put on their glad rags for the evening dance."

"And say, you never saw such a glitter of glad rags in your life, gowns paneled and trimmed with gold lace, pearls, collars of them, chains of them; diamonds, strings of them, necklaces, bracelets, clusters, buckles; and all the colors of the rainbow. It has the dazzle of every other resort in America beat to a frazzle. You can have the time of your life down there."

"But perhaps my idea of a good time and yours are not the same," I replied.

"Oh, that won't hurt you. Flagler is a minister's son and he plays the Puritan when he feels like it.



That is the funny thing about it, the rich snobs and swell people all chasing along the trail made by this son of a poor Presbyterian minister, on the East coast of Florida. They fly high until he says the word, and then they have to lie low. He won't have any golf on Sunday or dancing on Sunday evening. Some jolly fellows thought they would show the old chief, as they call him, a thing or two, and went out to play golf on Sunday morning. He brought them up standing.

"Take a run down there, I tell you, and see the most beautiful place in America, a paradise which is no dream or future fancy, but spot cash. I am going to give Mr. Kingsley a hint, and he will take you down in his car."

And so it happened in the evening that Mr Kingsley called up and said, "We are going to motor down to Palm Beach tomorrow and we want you and Mr. Dinsmore to go along. We shall start early and make the run in the morning and come back in the evening."

We went, the big limousine full, and one of Florida's joyous days smiling along the way. Now the road wound through stately pines, now through live oaks hung with moss, past a stretch of palmetto, or along the beautiful Indian river, the waters sparkling in the sunlight, a white sail here and there floating on its bosom, launches skimming across to the other shore. It is a charming ride with flowers and the music of the birds all the way. Thousands of tourists take it.

When you go to Grand Canyon the train leaves a long stupid waste of bare ground and natural poverty, runs into a slight depression, and stops behind a clump of half grown trees. You walk up a slight elevation through the trees, and there is the grandest



spectacle in America. It is a revelation so sudden and so awe-inspiring that you stand spellbound. Some visitors burst into tears. Worldly men have said that they felt an impulse to pray. It is all the work of nature, of titanic forces, of ages of time. Man is not in it. It tells you to be still, and look and wonder.

Palm Beach is also a sudden revelation. You cross a bridge, and a vision of marvelous beauty is before you. But it does not command silence. You could not keep still if you wanted to do so. You begin to exclaim and continue to exclaim. Over and over you say, "Isn't it beautiful! Isn't it beautiful!" It is not a masterpiece of nature, but man's handiwork and yet a dream of a fairyland come true. The original man was a gardener. It is race history to make flower beds and plant trees. At Palm Beach the tradition and instinct have reached a climax.

Once there was a waste of sand here, which scrub palmetto tried to shield from the open gaze of day. But scrub palmetto is a forlorn hope, a beggarly attempt to be something without push and energy enough to get up in the world. It is a poor wind, however, which does not do somebody some good, and one day a storm wrecked a vessel loaded with cocoanuts on this beach. What the natives did not carry away got busy and started a scattering grove of palms. Henry M. Flagler, a Standard Oil magnate who was making beauty spots along the Florida coast, saw the palms and selected the place for a supreme effort. He succeeded wonderfully.

On one side of the little paradise is Lake Worth; on the other side is the Atlantic ocean. They are connected by two avenues of trees, one of fine palmettos, the other of Australian pines, the most graceful tree ever transplanted on our shores. Its long drooping branches of willowy texture sway in the wind



like lace curtains. Nature used a fine loom when it made the Australian pine. It has been Mr. Flagler's special delight to walk in this avenue.

The grounds are a riot of color. There are great masses of croton, of gorgeous hue and prodigal variety of tints. And all around are the crimson of the hibiscus and the purple of the Bougain-villea. The borders of the flower beds are blue and gold, and the wealth of the tropics has been taxed to please the eye.

"What does it make you think of," said Miss Searcy to her cousin.

"I do not think at all," was the reply, "it has taken possession of me, mind and all. I am doing nothing but enjoy it. Has it started something in your mind?"

"When I look at the flowers and the palms," she replied, "it makes me feel that the Creator wanted to ask somebody the question that I asked you, that he wanted somebody to think about it, appreciate it, enjoy it. Therefore he made man, made him in his own image, with the love of the beautiful and all, one who could think about it as he did."

"That is, you mean that man was planned as an after-thought. The Creator had a world of beautiful flowers blooming in the meadows, water sparkling in the sunlight, stars glittering in the night, and nobody to walk in the garden nor take a look at it, or think a thought about it or say a word, an overwhelming wealth of beauty and a vacuum of appreciation. So He made man to meet a long felt want. Is that it?"

"I don't know. But really, don't you think that man is rather big to be put down as an after-thought? Perhaps he was a fore-thought, and all the beautiful things in creation were made to give him pleasure when he came."



"Certainly, man was the goal or the objective or whatever you call it. That is the way Genesis talks, and that is the way nature talks to me. But when you look at some of these human fairies flitting around here, what do you think?"

"Oh, I think the tailor made them."

"But you must admit that the tailor made a pretty good fit."

"Yes, and I think that he had a fit when he did it; that they had a fit, and that I should like to give some of our sex fits for appearing as they do."

"Don't, Susie, let us get our enjoyment out of it while we are here. And this reminds me that we had better be going over to the beach to see the 11 o'clock dip in the sea."

There are two functions during the day at Palm Beach which attract special attention, the bath in the sea, and the four o'clock tea under the cocoanut trees. The former function is peculiar, and of a divided interest. Out there is the ocean, grand and glorious, as it flashes in the Florida sunlight; and here are these bathing suits, curiously and wonderfully made. Spectators can take their choice and look more at the sea or more at the bathing suits. If the genius of decoration who studies colors and decoration were to come along he might wonder where some of these ideas came from, they are so unique. The four o'clock tea in the palm grove is wonderfully charming. Above are the great fronds of the palms, gently swaying across the blue of the sky, while the green cocoanuts cling to the trunks of the trees. The music of the orchestra is simply heavenly, and the throng of the people as picturesque as fashion and fancy and wealth and beauty can make it. Titled aristocracy from other lands is there, and untitled plutocracy from America is there; or there is a combination of



the two. You see a countess coming—everybody sees her—she is holding one end of a silken cord and a little dog is holding the other end. In Isaiah, a little child shall lead them, but here it is a little dog. Her father made millions and a French count fell in love with her, several millions' worth. A younger woman appears; she is a duchess. An English duke had a title and her father had more money than it was safe to die with. It was a go, another international love affair. And it all helps at Palm Beach. There are so many plutocrats in the resort that they become common, but dukes and counts are out of the usual order. They make punctuation marks and help to break up the monotony.

The afternoon was passing and it was time to begin the homeward hurry. But I had met an old friend who insisted that Dinsmore and myself should stay another day. We decided to do so and go home by train the next afternoon.

While passing out of the grounds Miss Searcy suddenly stopped, looked across a flower bed at a group of persons passing on the other side, and seemed somewhat agitated. She glanced at Dinsmore, but apparently he had seen nothing and was not concerned. The explanation comes later in the story.

During the evening I missed Don. He was not in the lobby, nor on the gallery nor in the loggia. There are thirteen miles of hallway in the Royal Poinciana, and I did not know but that he might have lost his way in the labyrinth and that it would be necessary to organize a searching party for his rescue. But while I was meditating over the matter my friend came up with an English clergyman and we sat down in the loggia for a chat. Like the majority of English visitors, the clergyman was over-charged with



criticism for most things American. He would not admit that even Palm Beach was beautiful. Finally I said to him, "You have been seeing the Florida sunsets for a week now, crimson, lovely; surely they must strike you as being beautiful." "Yes, rawther, he replied, "but don't you think them a trifle overdone?" While my friend was still laughing, I replied, that if he had said that our plutocracy was overdone, I could agree with him. "We have plutocracy and you have aristocracy; and both are overdone."

"I fawncy you are right," he said, "but people are either overdone or underdone or undone. Our society is older than yours, and we have learned that you cawn't keep human beings on a level. They shoot up or tumble down. I understand that your Mr. Flagler used to be a poor cobbler and made shoes for \$3.00 a pair. Now he has shot up and owns the whole East coast of Florida, railroads, hotels and all."

"I beg your pardon," said my friend, "but you have got a little bit mixed. Mr. Flagler did not make shoes, but left home at fourteen because he said there were not shoes enough in the family to go around. It is former Governor Douglass who made shoes at \$3.00 a pair. He stops at the Palms, down at Miami, and you probably met him when there."

"I see, I see. Yes, I met the governor at the Palms. He is from Boston, is he not, and quite classy? I remember now that he told me that his profits on shoes were 16 to 1."

"Excuse me, sir, but I must offer another correction. Mr. Bryan spends his winters at Miami, and he was the 16 to 1 man. No doubt you met him."

"I did, a charming man, with a broad forehead and a broad smile. A man of parts, I take it. Who was it he beat for the presidency three times?"



"He was called the Boy Orator of the Platte."

"I did not know that you let lads run for the presidency."

"Ordinarily we do not, but the Platte boy was unusually large for his age."

"I see. But who was it that said you couldn't hang him on a cross of gold, not on your life—isn't that your slang phrase for it?"

"It is, but for the love of Mike, don't gather up all our slang phrases and tattered bits of knowledge and make a lecture of them on America when you get home."

"I thank you most kindly for your suggestion, but I am not likely to do anything for the love of Mike, or Pat either. But let me make a suggestion to you American clergymen. You ought to preach against this awful love of the Almighty Dollar."

As this remark was addressed to me, I replied: "You are right, and the humiliating thing about it is that we are the only people in the world who love money. You English people don't care a thing for the Almighty Dollar. Pounds will do for you. When one of your bright literary lights comes here and chases all over the country for the Almighty Dollar, he can go to New York, exchange it for pounds sterling and sail away with no stigma of the dreadful dollar clinging to his clothes. It is convenient. But, as I already have said, we admit that the money business is becoming serious. It is getting on our nerves."

"Getting on your nerves? What is that?"

"It is our dumping ground. The blame, cause, or reason of everything queer or cranky, is charged to our nerves. Too much whisky is called a nervous breakdown. Too much temper is nervousness. A scared preacher in the pulpit is nervous."



"Perhaps you will permit me to suggest that you take American Nerves for your lecture theme when you return. It covers a multitude of sins; and, as I understand your brotherly kindness for us, you like to lecture us for our sins while here and lecture about our sins when you go home. It must be a great convenience to find that we have so many sins.

"But here comes our lost friend. Where have you been, Dinsmore?"

"I looked in at the ballroom until the dazzle of diamonds began to hurt my eyes, then I went over to the beach for fresh air."

"You seem nervous."

"I am," he replied with a look of annoyance.

The next morning an incident occurred which made us all nervous, and somewhat marred the visit to Palm Beach. While seated in the loggia waiting for my friend to show us through Whitehall, a gentleman approached and asked Dinsmore to step aside a moment for a word in private. A few minutes later I heard a scuffle and on looking around saw the man striking at Dinsmore with his cane. Dinsmore caught him and was about to throw him over the rail, but the man's friends rushed in and pulled him away, and the trouble was over.

"What was it?" I asked, with more excitement than Don was manifesting.

"That man has no sense," replied Dinsmore, "and there is a business matter back of it. If ever I was disgusted it is now. Here I am in the most beautiful place I ever have seen, and in the worst scrape I ever had. Tough luck that. I am going to get right out of here."

"No, you are not," exclaimed my friend, who had just arrived. "We'll go right over to Whitehall, and you'll forget all about it in five minutes."



And to me at least his word proved true, for Whitehall is a wonderful creation, a *carte-blanche* of money and art. "It makes me think of the royal apartments at Versailles," said Don. "I can see only one thing the matter with it. It is too grand to live in. I should be afraid of marring a floor if I stepped on it, or of slipping on the marble stairs if I tried to go up and down them."

We nearly exhausted our stock of exclamations as we went from one splendid room to another. Now it was the drawing room that seemed greatest, now the library, with its paintings on the walls, now the state dining room, and now the tapestry. Beautiful Whitehall! It is a dream. Kings would walk softly in it.



## CHAPTER X.

### MONEY-MAKING MAGIC.

**T**HERE are men of an eloquence which thrills the hearts of masses. There are master painters who hang pictures on the walls of time and give joy to generations. There are poets who pour out a tide of song which pulses along all shores. There are sages who speak words of wisdom which instruct all generations. There are statesmen who build empires. There are seers who see visions which light the human way across centuries. And there are men who make fortunes so great, so glittering that they dazzle the eyes of the business world. In their magic, like the magic of eloquence, there always is a something which cannot be explained, a secret of success which defies the expert critics.

It was so with the fortune building which began to astonish America and the rest of the world in the latter part of the last century. But the brain always devises a method, machinery, so to speak, to accomplish its purpose; and the particular cogs in the money-making machinery of these fortune builders were the holding company and the rebate. "Whose genius hit upon the holding company?" I asked my friend.

"It was Mr. Flagler's device, as he told me this story one day. Mr. John D. Rockefeller and himself were agreed that the acute competition among the oil men was not calculated to make them rich, that



they could make more money by working together than against one another. "But how can they get together?" asked Mr. Rockefeller. "If we had a scheme for uniting them we could make millions, but I don't see how it could be devised."

Mr. Flagler said that he thought he could work it out. The two men lived near each other and every morning they met at the next street corner and walked together to business. When they met the next morning Mr. Flagler had no plan, nor the next morning, nor the next; but the next morning he said, "John, I think I have it." And he proposed the holding company. Rockefeller said, "You have it, Henry, you have it."

It made the Standard Oil Trust, and all the other trusts, and it made fortunes so vast as to stagger imagination. It changed the face of the American business world.

"Do you mean to say," I remarked, "that the young boy who left home because of the poverty of a father who was preaching on \$400 a year, and who slept under the counter in an Ohio grocery store and pulled the wrapping paper around his body on cold nights, was carrying under his threadbare coat a scheme which has meant millions and billions to the trusts, and untold tribute from a willing or an unwilling people?"

"Yes, that was about it, and he was a Presbyterian minister's son."

"And predestinated to do it?"

"Cut that out, I should not like to hold the Lord responsible for the American trusts. We only know that Flagler did it."

"Who first thought of the rebate scheme?"

"I don't know, but the railroads have never heard the last of it. It had much to do with the policy



of restriction which the railway officials now so bitterly resent. But it gave the Standard Oil Company a long lead over its competitors."

"I suppose that this holding company held the members together in such brotherly union that they were happy ever after."

"Not exactly; they did not all or always go around with their arms linked in brotherly love. I was here at the Poinciana one evening when a leading man of the Standard Oil Company started down these steps, and another member started up. The one who was coming down rushed toward the other with outstretched hands and warm words of greeting. The other member of the great company ducked his head and shot past him without a word."

"What was the matter?"

"We'll omit that part of the story, except to say that it had to do with a business deal."

"Your reply suggests a question concerning the big noise which was raised a few years ago about Tainted Money. Is money tainted?"

"It smells pretty good doesn't it?"

"Yes, and looks better than an empty contribution box."

"Look at those flower beds down there, do they smell tainted? 'Consider the lilies,' said the Master. 'How they grow!' Yes, they grow in the mud. Yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Solomon would have envied such a beauty spot as Palm Beach. It is not what the lilies grow in but what they are that makes the difference. If a multi-millionaire's money causes beautiful things to grow, why not accept them? Mr Flagler came into Florida with \$40,000,000. He gathered up some little streaks of rust called railroads, shined them up, stretched them forward until he came to the jumping



off place down beyond Miami; then he jumped from one key to another until he was at the tip end of the state, and then took to the water and landed in Cuba. It was a marvelous achievement. It took a brave soul and a lot of Presbyterian perseverance to do it. It turned this long, dreary waste of sand, scrub palmetto, rattlesnake beds and alligator haunts into garden spots. It made a score of orange groves grow where one grew before—and oranges do not smell bad. It made the East coast a delight and a joy to the refugees from winter storms. It made occupation for men; it made bread for women and children. It made towns and cities and filled them with pretty homes, with churches and school houses. It created the beautiful until we look at it in joyful wonder. But the most beautiful thing about it is that it helped people to help themselves. It does not seem tainted does it?"

"To be honest," I replied, "I expect this scene of beauty at which I am now looking to be fragrant in my memory as long as I live. But go on, I am much interested."

"Look at it another way," he continued. "There are many things which ought to be done, but nobody has the money to do them. Take the hookworm, for example; it ought to have been hunted down long ago. What business had it to be making life miserable with nobody to interfere? Then they put some Standard Oil money into the investigation and started the chase after the germ. It is hard on the hookworm, but a good thing for the human race. This is only one illustration. When we take stock of these things some years hence, we shall find that the great American fortunes have done much for the health and happiness of mankind and that the men who did not want to die with all their wealth lying



like a mountain on their souls have kept multitudes of other people from dying before their time and will give safety to unnumbered generations in the future.

"What is the use of sniffing at a plutocrat's ten thousand dollars and then taking a little coin which has been across so many saloon counters and in and out of so many mean little transactions that it would make the face of the Indian stamped upon it blush if it had to give a history of its wanderings?

"There is another thing about Mr. Flagler; he had not only the money which created beauty, but a soul which appreciated it, and that is the real ownership of the beautiful. One day we were sitting on the loggia, and after looking at a beautiful cloud in a long silence he said, 'Do you think there will be anything more beautiful in eternity than that?' He did not own the cloud, but he did own its beauty. What ownership of these beautiful flower beds would he have had if their loveliness had made no appeal to him? Not many of us can put much wealth in our pockets, but if we are made right we can put all the world's wealth of beauty in our souls. I have been here a dozen years now and have seen many processions of people admiring these grounds. So that Mr. Flagler seems to me to have given them millions of dollars of happiness.

"But to change the subject again, does Mr. Flagler let the preacher at the Poinciana chapel speak his mind, or does the preacher have to walk his chalk line? Which has his way? The man in the pulpit or the man who built the church and pays the bills?"

"The man in the pulpit has his way in the pulpit. A worldly gentleman remarked one day that he thought the preacher would have to slow down in his criticism of the sins and slippery places of wealth or lose his job. Mr. Flagler brought him up standing



with the answer that the preacher would not have to slow down and would not lose his job. He did not forget that he was a minister's son before he was a rich man. If ever the plutocrat arrays his money against a free pulpit, a free platform and a free press, it will be tainted indeed."

"It certainly will. But after your years of observation of Mr. Flagler, what one particular quality in the man has most impressed you?"

"His pluck. He likes to do hard things, and he has done some of them in defiance of the advice of his most trusted men. Making money all men will agree is not easy."

"No, not as easy as spending it."

"Nor as easy as telling the rich man how he ought to spend it. But to get back; have you ever thought that the great American money making effort began soon after the Civil War? The boys and men of that day saw the nation in hard lines. They looked at life through dreadful headlines in the daily papers, through blood and tears and heartbreaking sacrifices. It stirred their spirits, made them ready to endure hardness, familiarized them with great struggles and great achievements. And they saw what could be done by organization, what a few bold, aggressive men could do in command of masses of men. Perhaps I am going too far, but I am almost persuaded that the so-called captains of industry were the natural successors of the captains of war. War sifts men until the real generals come to the front, and so does business. The little men lose battles; the strong men win battles, and then every thing goes their way. As long as there is competition, as long as man is matched against man and the business around one corner is matched against the business around another corner, the battle will be to the strong."



"But how are you going to get rid of competition?"

"I don't know. A preacher preaches against it, and if he outpreaches the other preacher in town he gets the crowd, but if not he loses out. If it were not possible for one man to outdo another I am afraid that the world would not get much done."

"To change the subject again, how long is the Poinciana kept open each year?"

"About ten weeks."

"And closed nearly ten months."

"Yes."

"Then it is either a paroxysm or a paralysis here?"

"Yes, that is about it."

"I don't want either. Come, Dinsmore, we must be going."







## CHAPTER XI.

### RUSHING A ROMANCE.

We parted in silence.  
We parted in tears,  
On the banks of that lovely river.  
But the odor of those by-gone years  
Shall hang over its waters forever.

WE TOOK the afternoon train from Palm Beach and reached the resort in the evening. Dinsmore was moody on the way, and he said that he would leave for the North by the midnight train. I did not try to detain him, for a kind of unexplainable chill had come over me after the unpleasant incident in the morning. I had a feeling that I did not understand it all. An engagement for the evening called me away for a couple of hours, and Don said he would go over to the Kingsleys and make a parting call. It was nearly train time when he came into my room again, and we hurried over to the station. He seemed quite upset about something, and got matters mixed with the baggage man. I helped to straighten it out, but had a feeling that there was some baggage going with him which he was neither checking nor expressing to me. He waved his hand from the platform, and my dear Don was gone. Then I had a little spasm of that loneliness which we feel when our friends go. It is bad enough in the daylight, but to walk back through the darkness of night with it and go stumbling into an empty room



makes it much more trying. I confess to real attacks of the blues when it occurs.

"Night is the time  
That brings unto the homesick mind,  
All we have loved and left behind."

I was glad to receive a letter from him sooner than I had expected. It read:

"My dear old chum: You may be surprised to hear from me so soon, but there was something which I did not have the courage to tell you before I left, and must tell you now. When I called at the Kingsleys, Ethel and her mother had gone to a church bazaar, and I asked Miss Searcy to take a walk over to the river with me, saying that I wanted to have a last good look at it. But the girl looked more beautiful than the river, and my attention got riveted on her, and the soft night winds were cooing, and there was sentiment all around. The first thing I knew there was a rush of romance to my head, and then something happened. I had not intended that it should happen, but it did. I proposed.

"She was silent, too awfully silent and cool for my comfort. After what seemed an age she said, 'Mr. Dinsmore, I am surprised, and the surprise has been coming on for a week or more.' You know about how she could say that, with her long eyelashes half concealing a bewitching glance and her lips parting with a dainty little smile. 'But I could wish that it had not happened. I think very highly of you, Mr. Dinsmore, and you have what a young woman likes to see in a young man when they are thinking of clasping hands and starting up the road together, a promising future. But you know I have had an unfortunate experience, and it has made me cautious. I am very much afraid of having a hand in a romance



if my heart is not in it. The next time I become engaged I want to stay engaged, and when I marry I want to stay married. It is all right to say "for better, or for worse," but I want to be dead sure that it will be for the better. I am not saying that I distrust you, but I distrust myself. To be entirely candid in so serious a matter, I do not think that I am in love with you. If a flower which you handed me seemed more than a whole garden full of other flowers, I should think that it was the thrill of the hand which gave it. But it is not that way. The signs are lacking.'

"By this time I was beginning to feel home-sick, and wishing that I had listened to the governor when he told me to keep off the banks of the Indian river. In the words of the song, I could have cried, 'Turn back the universe and give me yesterday.' But the universe does not back up nor back down for the accommodation of mistaken mortals. I had miscalculated. Perhaps if I had given her more time from her other experiment it would have been different.

"I was beginning to think what I should say and do next, but when I looked at her again she was crying, and then I wanted to weep a little myself. 'You do not know, Mr. Dinsmore,' she said with a sob, 'how painful it is to me to say what I have said to you, for I owe my life to you. I never can forget how you imperiled your life to save mine. You are a hero, and that always shall be my thought of you.'

"So I am to be hero instead of husband, and the beautiful young woman goes on her way. We parted at the river, for she said that she wanted to dry her tears and get her face straight before meeting that happy, heart-free girl at home.

"Now a little item personal to yourself. Don't stir up Miss Kingsley too much with your advanced



views on theology. I have just met a young man who knows the Kingsleys, whose sister was a class-mate of Ethel's, and he said that she was considered one of the brightest girls ever in the college, a champion debater in the literary society, and quite fond of a tussle with the professor of philosophy in her senior year. The young man grew quite enthusiastic about her; and you know that people as really religious as she is will do heroic things in defense of their faith. Those soft brown eyes look fawn-like, but I should not want to start up the intellectual fire back of them. I was surprised one day when calling there to see how many books on 'new theology' and up-to-date subjects were scattered around the room. If you get her started you might find that you had set off a whole arsenal of fireworks.

"I also remember a little incident which occurred on the steamship one day. The captain had honored us with seats at his table, and he was quite deferential to the two young ladies. But he criticised America so much that it became unpleasant. He laughed more heartily at his thrusts than the rest of us. But one day Miss Kingsley quietly and gently led him back to the Revolution, and when he had reached a high pitch, she began a comparison of the Georges, our one George and the English-German Georges. She seemed to have Thackeray's 'Four Georges' at her tongue's end—Miss Searcy told me afterwards that she had spent the morning reading up on it—and by the time she was through with the captain the table was in a roar of laughter. After that he confined himself to sea yarns at the table, and America had peace.

"So I say, look where you step, Old Top.

"Goodbye, good luck, God bless you."

"Don."



"P. S. I forgot to say that the name of the young man was Rosslyn. If ever he should cross our path again you will remember the name."

I made it convenient to call at the Kingsleys the next evening after I received the letter, and in the course of the conversation I turned Miss Ethel's thoughts back to her college days, and asked her if she had a class-mate named Rosslyn. "Yes," she replied, "and what a delightful girl she was."

"Dinsmore writes me," I added, "that he met her brother on the way up the road."

Miss Kingsley started slightly, but before she could reply her cousin came to the rescue with the remark that she had a little piece of news for me. "The young wife who had the interview with you the other day," she said, "and wanted to get back to her husband and old pastor, dropped me a note today from Palm Beach."

"From Palm Beach," I exclaimed, "how was that?"

"It was because I wrote her asking for an explanation. She replied that on reaching Jacksonville she found a telegram from her husband telling her to wait there until his arrival, that he was at Atlanta on his way to Florida and would join her, and they would go on their way together to Palm Beach."

"And you mean to say that they were at Palm Beach when we were?"

"Yes, I saw her just as we were leaving."

"Did you know her husband?"

"No; if I had known and seen him, I might have felt differently about the matter."

"What do you know about her affairs?"

I know that they are complicated, but you cannot unravel that kind of a tangle as you can a stocking, by getting hold of a thread and pulling at it. Let



us change the subject and talk about the new woman's lecture which we heard this afternoon."

"How was it?"

"Clever, very clever. Really I felt sorry for the men who were there. Being a prudent man, you foresaw the evil and hid yourself. But I think the lecturer's nervous system got the better of her and she went too far. I am enough of a new woman to want the franchise, but I also am frank enough to say that when the ballot box needs defending it would be handy to have a man around. And I think, too, that as the years lengthen their shadows and the brown hair begins to be sprinkled with gray, that I should rather have a man say to his neighbor, 'My old woman,' than to have the neighbors say of the maiden lady over the way, 'The new woman.'"

"Oh, you funny girl," exclaimed Miss Kingsley, "but I pray that you may have good success and get the best man in the world."

"You don't mean that you pray," replied her cousin, "but that you meditate. It is one of the new discoveries that prayer is meditation."

"But don't you say every night, 'Let us say our prayers, Ethel.'"

"I do, because my mother taught me that when I was little; and the little Susie still prays, but the big Susie meditates."

"You darling, hereafter when I kiss you for the night I'll make it double, a kiss for the little Susie, and a kiss for the big Susie."

I was beginning to think this very interesting, when Miss Ethel changed the subject by saying, "We are going to Ormond tomorrow, and we all want you to go along."

"What are you going to Ormond for?" I asked.

"Papa wants to see John D. Rockefeller playing



golf, and the rest of us are going for the ride. The beach up that way is called the finest in the country."

"I much regret that I cannot go with you, but I am to preach a special discourse next Sunday, and sermons do not make themselves."

"I have heard sermons from the natives down here," said Susie laughingly, "which did not have a maker; they just spilled out. And I have heard sermons from the experts up North which did not have a Maker anywhere, beginning or end, it was all nature-religion."

"I stopped at Ormond on my way down," I said, "and chanced to see Mr. Rockefeller at golf."

"How did he play?"

"He struck the ball and watched to see it light."

"There was nothing very remarkable about that."

"No, but a man mounting up to a fortune of about a billion dollars is rather remarkable. The rest of us are excusable for staring at him, whether he makes a golf hit or another hundred million."







## CHAPTER XII.

### A DAY WITH THE MOSSBACKS.

**I**T SEEMED to me that I never before had seen so beautiful a Sunday morning. The sun was mounting into a cloudless sky, the dewdrops were on the grass, the birds were pouring a flood of song from a thousand throats, a soft wind was in the trees; and the gleaming silver of the long streamers of moss which swayed across the path, the green and the gold of the orange groves, the flowers in the yard, and the ripple and the laughter of the waters in the river, made the world radiantly beautiful. I felt all the gladness of it, all the inspiration of it when I went into the pulpit. My theme was "The Beauty of Holiness," and I told the people that the beautiful world upon which they looked that morning had already preached them a sermon on the subject, that God loved the beautiful, that he wanted nothing to seem ugly or dark and gloomy, that he wanted no forbidding, frowning doctrine, no depressing beliefs, that He made the world to give them joy, not to frighten them, not to fill their minds with misgivings, nor their hearts with trembling. God wants us to put away all the false alarms with which superstition has filled religious life.

Medieval theology is dead and ought to be buried. We live in a new age, an age of knowledge, of progress, an age in which we educate the people into religion, not scare them into it. No tree in the for-



est, nor plant in the garden looks beautiful when its leaf begins to wither. Knowledge is the tree of life. I repeat, we live in an age of knowledge. When Martin Luther was born, America was hidden behind the dim distance and mist of an untraveled ocean. Columbus added another side to the world, and Darwin added another side to human knowledge. He changed the universe from a miracle to a growth. The human mind has marched to discoveries and conquests which were beyond dreams when the reformers broke down the barriers to freedom. All life throbs with a new and boundless energy. Then knowledge was a thimble-full; now it is an ocean. Then the school was for the few, now for all. Then the printed page crawled slowly from the press, and feeble and few crept along a broken road or dim path; now it floods the world with the morning light. We have put wings on everything, and the thrill of the swift and the instantaneous is everywhere.

Is such a world to be preached to as Luther preached to men and women who were just beginning to rub the darkness of the Middle Ages out of their eyes? I do not think so. Grant, as I cheerfully do, all the great things done by the Reformation, yet let us face the fact squarely that it has served its period, and that to bow to it any longer would be to fasten upon ourselves the tyranny of dead hands. Moses led Israel to the Jordan, but could not go over into the promised land. The Reformation led Protestantism out of the wilderness of indulgences, papal oppression and priestly interference with the right of the soul to talk to God, but now it has come to a swollen Jordan, to a flood of knowledge, which is out of the old banks, and it cannot carry us over to an age of glowing promise.



There are people who do not know that a new age has arrived. They still think that the law was written by Moses, but scholars declare that the story of Moses must be laid on the shelf. They tell us that the law was written by priests when Israel's exiles hanged their harps upon the willows by the rivers of Babylon, that they borrowed the code of the natives and then put wonders and signs behind it to make it impressive. The scholars tell us Abraham was only a tribal name, that there was no real, actual Jacob to run away from home, and that Joseph never was in Egypt, that he was an imaginary boy, a Hebrew tradition. They also tell us that Daniel was not in a lion's den, that there were two or three Isaiahs, or as many as scholarship thinks necessary. The Psalms were not written by David, but by unknown poets. All these things, I say, are now given us as the conclusions of a reverent scholarship. In a word, criticism is giving us a new Bible, free from myths and miracles. Psychology and the expert are becoming authority alike for preacher and people.

Along with this, the modern interpretation is teaching us that Jesus of Nazareth was not a God come down out of heaven, but a man reaching up to heaven to show us what man will be when evolution has finished its course. "Prophets, priests, poets, philosophers, He towers above them all." "And whatever the surprises of the future, He will never be surpassed." His death on the Cross was a pattern of self-sacrifice, not an atonement. He was chief among martyrs. Forgiveness is an eternal part of divinity and does not require a ransom.

I admit that some of these things sound more radical than I like, that they throw beliefs cherished by our fathers into the back alley. But religion which makes us believe because our fathers believed, is a



tyranny. A religion which keeps us tied to our mother's apron strings is slavery. Progress means that a generation knows more than their fathers and mothers, think higher and deeper than their fathers and mothers, are better than the men of the past; that they drink less, do not fight duels, nor do a whole lot of other things which used to be good form in first-class society.

The modern man believes in salvation by character. He is not waiting to go to heaven when he dies, but believes in making a heaven here and now. "I saw a new heaven and a new earth," said the seer of Revelation. That is what we see, not up there in the vast distance of the blue and the eternal, but here where men and women toil and struggle and weep and hope and clasp their children to their bosoms. O friends, be free, be strong, be good. Look upon all that is best and go forward. Look upon all that is beautiful and rejoice.

The church was crowded to overflowing, and the sermon made a sensation. The old man who sat down in front said that the parson was "a purty preacher and powerful interestin, but that sermon did not set well on his system." A hard-shell Baptist family, who had flounced out of the church in the middle of the discourse, remarked that if that was the new-fangled, patent process religion, they hoped it would keep scarce on the banks of the Indian river.

Mr. Kingsley, so I was told, observed that the preacher was young yet, and some young preachers had to go through an attack of the measles before they got their bearing. Miss Searcy said that it was up-to-date preaching, and would go further ten years from now; that the new preacher had not thought it safe to get too far in front of the firing line. Miss Kingsley did not say anything just then, but if she



did not have something in her eye when she went out of church it was because I could not make a good guess. Bob Bamby waited until I was near the hotel and then said, "Parson, I shouldn't wonder if you started something in this town today. Some of the people down here don't work very hard at their religion, but they are ready to fuss about it any old time. They are powerful fond of Daniel in the lion's den. They like to see him in there just ready to be all chewed up, and then have the lions put their tails between their hind legs and slink away. It will be a mighty big privation to the native parsons if they can't preach about Daniel any more. But say, Parson, you were sly about Jonah and the whale. I guess you knowed better than to attack a big fish story on the east coast of Florida. Lord, man, they would believe that Jonah caught a whale with a fish worm."







## CHAPTER XIII.

### A BANKER'S DAUGHTER IN THE PULPIT.

I WAS not long in learning what Miss Kingsley had in mind. The little daily paper announced in its Monday evening issue that Miss Ethel Kingsley would speak on religious subjects at the church the next Sunday afternoon; and the editor added that it was suspected that the banker's daughter would make some reply to the sensational sermon of the previous Sunday.

I heard that her father objected at first, that her mother said, "Oh Ethel!" but her cousin Susie said, "Sick him, Tige! Go for him!"

When she persisted in her determination her father said: "I want you to understand, Ethel, that if you get into this thing I shall see you through but it is going to cost me \$50 to hire the Chautauqua Hall, for you will never get your congregation into that church. These people down here will go miles to hear a theological scrap."

"You are a good papa," she replied, and I'll promise you not to ask for a new spring hat."

"But if you shy your old hat into the ring, how are you going to get along without a new one?"

"Perhaps if it gets tramped on it will be in just the right shape for the new spring fashion."

The news flew fast. The West Palm Beach paper headed it up:

A BANKER'S DAUGHTER IN THE PULPIT  
SHE IS GOING TO TRIM THE PARSON



A Miami paper had for its title:  
A YANKEE GIRL THROWS DOWN THE GAUNT-  
LET TO A YOUNG NEW YORK PREACHER

A Fort Lauderdale sheet flamed out with this:  
*The Prettiest Girl on the Coast Is Going to Cross  
Swords With the Most Eloquent Preacher That  
Ever Came Down the Pike.*

The Daytona and Orlando papers also put it in sensational headlines. And the Jacksonville papers gave it a flaring send-off. It was "good stuff."

The meeting was announced for three o'clock but at noon the people were beginning to arrive and by one o'clock the sidewalks around the church were filling up. Mr. Kingsley went over and hired the hall. He shook his head, but looked elated when he saw the coming crowds.

And how they did come! Autos lined the streets. They came over from Orlando and Sanford, and down from Daytona and New Smyrna. Two cracker preachers came forty miles on horseback, and women walked tiresome distances with babies in their arms. They "allowed that the purty girl would make it mighty interestin' for the Yankee preacher." The town could have burnt down that afternoon without driving anybody out of a house. They all were at the meeting.

The great hall was crowded, and men looked in at the windows. Two or three reporters were at a table, and there was an air of expectation throughout the house. It was a pretty trying moment for a speaker who had not been experimenting on large audiences. But when Miss Kingsley arose to speak she seemed to have herself well in hand, though her deferential attitude toward her hearers was almost pathetic. Her voice was clear and its peculiar music gave to her tones the very witchery of eloquence. The great congregation was soon under its spell.



"They stoned Paul," she began, "when he was preaching in cities and towns of the old Roman Empire and they are stoning him yet, now that he is preaching in all lands and in all languages. I am not here this afternoon to defend him—he needs no defense. The greatest of human intellects, the profoundest students of religion have bowed to the imperial power of his mind. I am here to lend a helping hand in the work which commanded his loyalty and love. It is only the weak hand of a woman but if it no more than touches the fringe of the border, I gladly give it. You remember how beautifully he spoke to the Philippians of the women who had labored with him in the gospel and whose names were in the Book of Life. Life is short, but the reward is long. If you and I can help one another this afternoon to get our names on the page white and fair it will be a blessed consummation.

"Nor am I here to defend the Bible. It defends us, saves us from the evil within and the enemy without. Martin Luther said to the dreadful array of power and hate which confronted him at the Diet of Worms, 'If you can show me by the Scriptures that I am wrong, I will submit.' They could not do it, and he went forth to change the face of the world. Precious old Book! It will be here until the stars fade from the sky. (Amen, shouted the two cracker preachers.) But while the Bible cannot be destroyed, precious souls can be destroyed. 'Offend not one of these little ones who believe in Me,' said the Master. Oh, the evil they do when they offend one of the little ones in the Christian life, weak in the faith!

"Now in order that I may help you to follow me and that I may follow myself, I shall do as the ministers do, take a text. It is in the parable of the Prodigal Son:

"He began to be in want."



"We are in a world of wants. To live at all is to want. To begin to be is to begin to want. The first cry of the infant is for food; the last longing look of the dying man is for life. And from the cradle to the grave there is an incessant, daily, hourly round of wants. Some wants are more pressing than others. Some are more special than others. The sick man says, 'The fresh air of the morning is so full of health, but I have no health.' The blind man says, 'The world is so full of life and beauty, but I am in darkness all the time. I cannot even see the face of my mother.' The deaf man says, 'There is music everywhere, and I cannot hear the song of bird or the voice of love.' The child of poverty says, 'It is such a big world, and I have so little.' And we all are saying, 'The march of the ages is so great and grand, and I have such a little part in it; time is so long, and life is such a little while; I never shall pass this way again, and I am missing so much.'

"This multitudinous cry of want kept going up to heaven and pressing against the great heart of God until he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. When Jesus came they pressed upon Him on every side with their cry of want. The blind cried to Him by the way. The lame man called to Him. Lepers standing in the separation of a lonely agony cried to Him. Fathers came to Him with their sons, mothers with their daughters, wayward women with their tears of penitence. In a word, the whole world of misery and of grief pressed upon Him. The great Napoleon said in the height of his career that there were men and women in the cellars of Paris who had never heard his name. But when Jesus Christ came to a town everybody knew He



was there, and they came running to Him with their troubles and their wants.

"But now they tell us that He was only a man. I cannot believe it. I cannot believe that God raised up only a man to meet this world of want, to answer all this great cry of our humanity. No man, it matters not how big they make him, could measure up to all the magnitude and multiplicity of our world's wants. He must be God to be Master of so vast an undertaking. (Amen.)

"He went about doing wonders, great works they are called, healing the sick, opening the eyes of the blind, unstopping the ears of the deaf. Nothing baffled Him, except unbelief. But now they are trying to explain away all the miracles. They tell us that the miracles mar the picture of the Christ. But do they? I see before me men and women whom I have met in the great art galleries of the Old World admiring the paintings of the famous masters. Now suppose that some man came and with a sharp little knife cut out a strip from one of the great masterpieces, cut it from top to bottom, would the passing throng admire it any more? Would it be a masterpiece, or would it be a wreck, a fragment?

"And so with the gospel picture of Jesus Christ, will it be a picture of Him if we cut out the story of the miracles, the wonderful works? He built no hospitals. He founded no colleges. He established no state. He carried no baskets of food to the poor. He did not watch at the bedside of the sick through the long watches of the night. Pray, what wonderful works did He do if not the works which Matthew, Mark, Luke and John tell us he did? Be careful now, how you use that little sharp knife of criticism on the gospel picture, (Amen), or we will not have a Christ. (Amen.)



"Even if we could spare the miracles from the picture, we cannot spare the power which the miracles signify. They were a sign and demonstration that there was in that mighty hand of His a power equal to all the world's wants, and that there was in that great heart of His a love responsive to all the world's sore cry. Let the miracles stand, let them stand. (Amen.) I know when I see Him stilling the waves of the sea that He can still the storms in my heart and your heart. I know when I see Him feeding the multitude with the few loaves and fishes, that he had power to feed an army and overrun the world with conquest, and build an empire by force, but would not do it because He was here to build a kingdom of love. With our weak eyes and feeble sight we cannot see very far into the spiritual mysteries and eternal meanings, but the miracles help us to see God's power and goodness. They lend words and wings to our songs of faith and hope. Let them stay in the picture. (Amen.) Children can understand them if expert scholars cannot. Agonizing mothers can mount up on them to the Hand that helps. (Amen.)

"Again, I want you to go with me to the foot of the Cross on that dreadful day and look upon that scene with its contagion of derision, its taunts and jeers. 'He saved others, Himself He cannot save.' Was that insolent taunt true? Did Jesus Christ die that day because He could not save Himself? Because the combined power of Jewish priests and the Roman governor had laid hold of Him and dragged Him to the cross and he could not break their deadly grasp? I look at the miracles and they tell me that it was not so, that He had power irresistible. Why then did He die? Why did He let them drive the cruel nails and spikes through His hands and feet? Because He could not help Himself and save us. He



was dying for us, not a victim of common weakness, but the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world. (Amen and Amen.)

'There is a fountain filled with blood  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,  
And sinners plunged beneath that flood  
Lose all their guilty stains.'

"The children of faith will sing that song until they all go home to heaven, and then will sing it on the crystal sea. (Amen and Amen.)

"Now turn to the prodigal and his want. When he began to be in want he came to himself. He had been away from himself. He had not been himself; he had been somebody else. You may have noticed in your own life that we never think we are ourselves except when we are at our best. If you are not feeling well you say, 'I am not quite myself today.' When a man commits a crime he runs away and changes his name, he becomes somebody else, he is not at his best. The prodigal was not feeling well in that far country. He was not at his best, but at his worst. When he came to himself, it was a start back from the worst to the best again; from his rags to the best robe in the house, from gnawing hunger to a feast, from grimy hands to a ring of adoption on his finger, from a herd of swine to a great company of rejoicing people, with a glorious welcome in their outstretched hands. (Amen.) He was at his best again, and that meant that he was himself. God wants to put us at our best, because nothing less than that is our real self. Jesus Christ wants to present us to God without spot or wrinkle or blemish, or any such thing, in the white robe washed in His blood. It will be glorious to be at our best, and ourselves. (Amen.)



"Wasn't that boy glad to get back to his father's house again? Once he had thought his father an old foggy, and did not want to be tied to his mother's apron strings. He did not want to go to church, but to get away where 'a fellow would have some liberty.' His liberty was a dangerous thing, even if it does sound like a heresy to say it in this free land of ours, where the eagle screams over the cradle of every child as soon as it is born. But the servants of the house could not get away; and after the prodigal had tried the liberty of all outdoors and all the open doors of sin, he sat down and cried, because the servants in his father's house had bread and to spare and he was perishing with hunger.

I tell you, my friends, liberty is a dangerous thing, unless we know what to do with it. A free country needs an immense amount of the gospel. (Amen.) It needs God's signboard at every corner. Freeborn children need second-born parents, born of the Spirit. You cannot be free and be safe without religion. If my father were not present this afternoon I could tell you a story of the many young men he has saved from perishing with hunger because they did not know what to do with their liberty in a big city.

"Certainly the children of our country are not suffering from a lack of liberty, and who does not want them to have all the freedom of joyous young life that can be harmonized with their future welfare. But when disaster comes they will not thank their parents for giving them a liberty which proved their ruin.

"We want truth, we must want it if we are followers of our Lord, for it was one of the greatest wants that He came to this world to meet: 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life.' We want the truth as much as those who are urging what they call new



truth. They intimate that we are afraid of truth. We are not afraid of truth. But we are afraid to throw away truth just because it is old, and we do hesitate to accept everything as truth just because it is new. There is in the animal world what is termed 'the call of the wild.' A tamed animal suddenly reverts to the traits of the wild ancestor; a dog turns back to the wolf, or the hyena. There may be, I fear there is, something like it in religion or theology. A tamed theologian suddenly hears the call of the wild, and goes back to trends and traits of a pagan ancestor. He thinks that his theology has become tame, and that now he is going forward, when in fact he is going backward. From the bottom of my heart I pity any school of men who think that they are advancing when they are slipping backward, when they look upon an idea as new which is a heresy so old and so done for by human logic that it has been forgotten. Any man ought to know the difference between a crawfish backing away into a hole in the ground and a lark shaking the dew of the meadow from its breast and mounting upward with a song of the morning leaping from its little throat.

"Must we deny all the past to keep up with the present? Must we sit around in the morning waiting until the cable brings us the latest conclusions of German scholarship before we resume our daily journey in the religious life? Does nobody know what to believe except the experts, and do they always know what they believed the day before, or will believe tomorrow? It is better to be tied to the apron-strings of a believing, praying mother, than to be tied to a theological kite and hung up between heaven and earth with nothing to stand on below and nothing in sight above. (Amen.)



"A minister may preach eloquently on this great parable, and yet be just as much of a prodigal as the young man who went into a far country and got into want. The prodigal son ran away from his father's and mother's home. The prodigal preacher runs away from his father's and mother's religion. A sheep can stray from the fold, and so can a young man with a sheepskin stray from the faith. (Sensation in the audience.) The prodigal son got into a far country; so does the prodigal preacher, such a far country that the rest of us mortals cannot follow him. And then they tell us that it is because we can't think or don't think. I tell you that it is always a far country when it is away from God. The prodigal found himself away from the base of supplies, and we all are away from the base of supplies when we are away from God. He sent his Son into the world that God might be near to us and we near to Him. But when they make only a man of Jesus Christ, they put us into a far country again. 'He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father,' said the Master. That is what the human heart craves, God near enough to see and hear and feel and know. 'Immanuel, God with us.' Glory be to his name. (Amen and Amen.)

"When the prodigal came to himself he began to think of what they had to eat in his father's house. It is strange how a boy will fuss and complain about the table which is set before him in the dear old home, and then when he is married he never tires telling his wife what a good cook his mother was. (A ripple of laughter over the audience.) There are young preachers who do the same thing, figuratively speaking. They fuss about the home cooking and want something else to eat; and then when they have chewed the husks of Liberalism and Rationalism awhile they begin to understand what a good cook



that dear, pious mother was. (Amen.) I thank God for a praying mother. (Amen.)

"When the prodigal had come to himself and to a second sober thought about it, he said:

"The old-time breakfast is good enough for me.

The old-time dinner is good enough for me.

The old-time supper is good enough for me."

As the fair orator said this she stepped to the front, and with a triumphant look in her face and ringing tones exclaimed:

"The old time religion is good enough for me."

The effect was electrical. A wave of applause swept over the great audience, and every preacher in the house shouted, "Amen."

After stilling the tumult with a little motion of her hand she went on: "Woman's heart was hungry when Jesus Christ came into the world, and He fed it. Brute force had conquered the world. The Caesars had sent forth their legions, and they brought back victory and long lines of helpless captives. From her Seven Hills Rome ruled the world. Jesus Christ was a new kind of being. He exalted the attributes which belonged to woman's heart. Pilate's wife said, 'I had a dream about Him.' It was not her dream alone, but woman's dream of the ages, the dream that some day there would come a mighty One who would not rule by force, but by love. When this One came she recognized Him. She always will recognize Him, for He satisfies the greatest want of her heart. Think what a far country woman was in before Christ came. Think what a far country she will be in if they take away her Christ. Then indeed will she begin to be in want. Men may make less of Christ, for they can prevail by brute force; but woman never can make less of Him, for heart power is her



stronghold in the world. It was because He was more than a man that His coming has made the world so much better than man made it. The more He gets into the heart of the world the more truly does woman come into what is reasonably and properly her own.

"Think of the long, long ages, dreary and dreadful, when man lost so much which woman could have helped him to do, when the world lost the high value of her best attributes.

"And this brings me to the Father's exclamation when the prodigal came home, 'He was lost and is found.' Who can measure what was lost to this world because it did not find the worth of woman's heart and the infinite value of man's soul? When Jesus Christ came He began to look for that which was lost, and He found it.

"I know that it is not thought good form in some pulpits to speak of a lost world; men talk about science, but not about saving lost souls. But what has science been doing, what is it doing, but trying to recover a lost world, lost forces, lost power to minister to man's incessant wants? Five thousand years ago a bird sat on a limb over a mountain stream and sang a beautiful song. The song was lost because there was no human ear in the wilderness to hear it; and the power of the rushing waters below was lost because there was no hand or brain of man to harness it to the wheels of industry. For long and toilsome ages man did not find that power. Now science has found it; and is lighting the world with it, helping the hand of toil with it. The prodigal power has come home. It was in a far country. It was lost but is found.

"What science is doing in the material world Jesus Christ is doing in the moral world, redeeming its lost forces, its moral forces, its spiritual power. We will



have heaven here below when all the moral forces of the human kind have been redeemed and turned into one great rolling, resistless tide toward the shores of the eternal world.

"Yes, Jesus is calling prodigals home. He is finding lost ones. A man said, "I believe the Bible because it finds me." We believe in Christ because He finds us. And what is so great is that He takes us as He finds us. (Amen.)

'I am a sinner saved by grace.  
This is my story,  
To God be the glory,  
I am a sinner saved by grace.'

"But they tell us that the father's forgiveness of his wayward and wandering prodigal shows that God is forgiving, and that there is nothing needed for forgiveness but for us to go back and get it; that there is no need of an atonement and an offering for sin on the cross.

"But Jesus Christ is not telling the whole story of human redemption in this parable. You might as well say that there is no need of preachers or missionaries because no preacher was sent into the far off country to bring back the prodigal. The Pharisees and scribes murmured because He ate with publicans and sinners, and Jesus told this parable to show that God wants to save His lost children. The woman wanted to find the lost piece of money because it was hers. The shepherd wanted to find the lost sheep because it was his. God wants to find lost men and women because they are His. The joy which it gives Him when He finds them is the climax of the story. How He saves them is not the story. The Cross tells that story:



'In the cross of Christ I glory,  
Towering o'er the wrecks of time.  
All the light of sacred story  
Gathers round its head sublime.'

"That is where all the light of the story shines. That is where it becomes sublime beyond all human expression or measure of sacrifice or love.

"'Tell me the old, old story.'

"The prodigal got home. Oh, brothers, sisters, I know that down in your hearts you all want to get home. Don't run into that far country where want will close down upon you forever. The prodigal had to go as far back as he had strayed from home. Remember, remember, that you will have to go as far back as you run away or miss the eternal home.

"Get the prodigal's penitence in your hearts and his prayer on your lips, or you will never make even a start to the heavenly home. 'Father, I have sinned.' When a sinner says that, says it from a hungry heart, from a penitent heart, they get ready to ring the bells of heaven. Then they begin to prepare for a great reception, to look up the best there is in the house. It is wonderful, wonderful how God thinks nothing too good for returning sinners. He gave the best he had in heaven to save them. He gives them the best He has in heaven when they are saved. It is wonderful, wonderful. The poet prophet of Israel said, 'His name shall be called Wonderful.' Here we are creatures of want, want; there we shall want for nothing. Here we grieve every day that we fall so far below our ideals, there we shall be at our best, not for a sweet, beautiful little moment, but forever. (Amen.)

"Up out of the weariness, out of the long struggle, out of the prayers, out of the tears and the years, I see them coming, coming to the home gathering.



Sinners who had much forgiven, veterans who had many scars, men who had overcome the world, women who had believed in darkest night, devoted souls who had not counted their lives dear to them, martyrs whose bodies had been scorched by fire, broken on the wheel, missionaries who went to the ends of the earth to tell the story of Christ's love, to seek for the lost brother, I see them coming, coming, a great multitude whom no man could number."

Here the address became so eloquent and appealing that it could not be described, and the reporters dropped their pencils and listened spellbound to the end. Her closing words were taken from the beautiful hymn:

"I know not why God's wond'rous love  
To me He hath made known,  
Nor why, unworthy, Christ in love  
Redeemed me for his own.  
But I know in whom I have believed,  
And am persuaded that He is able  
To keep that which I've committed unto Him  
Against that day."

When she sat down tears were glistening on her cheeks, and the effect of it all was very great. Women were sobbing, men were wiping their eyes; her father was like a man transfigured; her mother was weeping, and her cousin was beaming upon her with devouring admiration and love. Tears were rolling down Bamby's tanned face and Lucy was praying. The cracker preachers could not have looked happier if they had been up to heaven and just got back. The other preachers were shaking hands with each other and rejoicing. The Baptist minister of the place told me a year later that he knew of three score persons who were converted that afternoon and joined the different churches.



I came away feeling that it was worth all her college training and all her years of mental discipline to have such mastery in that one hour. And far more did I think of the Christian faith which made the mastery so well worth while.

Her mother was doing more than she knew when she baptized her child into her faith with her tears.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### A PULLMAN PORTER'S PHILOSOPHY.

**F**ORTUNATELY for my convenience and comfort of mind I received a night letter from my mother on Tuesday morning telling me that I must return at once, that the congregation was falling off, that the church was becoming restless, and that she was not feeling well herself.

"Don't try to bring all those people around to your views," she added, "they would only backslide if you did, for that is part of their religion. Two or three weeks of revival and then six months of backsliding. Mind your mother, and get back here and saw wood in your own yard."

"Mother has hit a psychological moment," I said to myself, "and I shall mind her." I packed up my external belongings but was not so sure that I was getting all of my internal system away with me. The people came to the station and gave me their good wishes. Mr. Kingsley was kind enough to say that they hoped to see me back again next year and reminded me that there was a box of oranges in the express car for my mother. Mrs. Kingsley looked at me in a motherly and prayerful way, as if she thought I was not beyond redemption. The cousins got caught in a throng on the platform, and I had to imagine the rest.

After Bob Bamby had carried my handbag into the car he paused long enough to say: "I told you that



you would start something, but the Lord knew how to use it, and I am going to be a better man." Bob was among the number who united with the church as a result of the meeting.

While the afternoon was dragging heavily along and I was trying to forget myself in a newspaper, the porter, who had been eyeing me for some time, slipped up and said, "I'se the only man on this train what knows that you is a Beecher."

"Hush, don't tell anybody," I said, "but how did you find it out?"

"Well, sah, jes' as soon as you come on the train I knowed it, 'cause when I was a boy I hear Henry Ward Beecher preach once, and I knowed you was a chip off the old block. Shuah, you is. He combed his hair away from his forehead, and kep his ears set back, jes' like you."

"You like all the big preachers, don't you?" I replied.

"No, sah; can't eactly say that I do. I like some of 'em, but some of 'em I don' like. They gets so high up that I can't mos' always foller 'em. It's like sleepin' in one of these here cars; it's easier to get in a lower berth than in an upper berth."

"But if you go to sleep in church what is the difference?"

"That's right, sah, but you have to take a step ladder to git in a upper berth, and I don' like a preacher what makes me use a step ladder to git up to whah he's at. I radder go to a church whah they sing:

'Swing low, sweet chariot, a comin' for to carry me home,'

If the chariot swing low, I can get in, but if the preacher is up in a flyin' machine, I can't cotch up with him.



"I tell you, Mistah, even the big people like a lower berth."

"You mean that if they do think high, they sleep low?"

"Yes, sah, yes sah, if the preacher git too high they go to sleep."

"You must see a good many big people traveling up and down this road."

Yes, sah, big men an—an stout women. And them big rolypoly women give me a lot of trouble. They always wan' the winder open, makes no difference how col' the wind a blowin,' and the man in the nex' seat a shiverin' an' a pullin his coat collar up his neck an' a snuffin' at his nose. They ought to ride on the cow-catcher an' git all the win' what the train meets comin' up the road.

"But if the dus' git in, they say, 'What a dirty car you keep.' An if a little cin'ner hit them in the eye they blame it all on me. Yes, sah, a porter git blamed for everything. One night a big fat man fell out of a upper berth, an' I was leanin' over the lower berth fixin' a pillow, an' the man he falled right on my back. He nearly done smashed my ribs in, but when he git up he say, 'What you tryin' to kill me fer?' and he cuss at me hard. Then I talk back, an' he say, 'You sassy nigger, I am goin' to report you to the president of the road, and have you bounced.'"

"When I gits back from the nex' trip the president he call' me into the office, and looks black at me. Then he say, 'Jim, you've been reported. Did a man fall out of an upper berth?'"

"'Yes, sah,' says I, kin' of scared like, 'he slip and fall.'"

"'Did he fall on your back?'"

"'Yes, sah,' says I, skeered plum' white.'"

"'And did he cuss you for it?'"



"'Yes, sah,'" I says, 'Jus' ready to cry.'

"Then he look hard at me agin, and he say, 'Jim, if ever that fellow falls on your back again', and cusses you for it, punch him in the nose, punch him good and hard, and I'll pay your fine and give you a turkey for Christmas.'

"Then he laugh, an' I don' laugh too. I didn't git my feet down on the groun' agin' for two hours."

"You ought to be a preacher," I said, "And then you would not be blamed for anything."

"Gosh amighty, man, you doesn't know what yous' talkin' about, if you am a preacher. The preachers and the president of the United States git blamed for everything. If they git to fightin' over in Europe, the president is to blame. If they have a scrap down in Mexico, the president git Hail Columby for not stoppin' it before it's done begun. If prices go up, they want to knock the president down. If prices go down, they blow him up. Yes, sah, hot or col', they make it good and hot for the man in the White House.

"An' the preachers! Why, sah, if a preacher parts his hair on the right side, they say he ought to part it on the lef' side; an' if he he part it on the lef' side, they think he ought to part it in the middle. If he don' have any hair worth speakin' of, they wonder why the 'ole cotton top' don' use a hair restorer, or a wig, or somethin'. Yes, sah, they do.

"If he don' go a callin', they say he jus' a book worm and no good at all out in the win' and dus' where udder peoples have to go. If he do go callin', they say he's a nice man, but a no account preacher, that he never in his study, that he never gives them nothin' in his sermons, only the little things what sticks to his clothes when he is runnin' aroun'. If he preaches so that they can understan' him they say



he not deep, and if he preaches so that they can't understan' him they say he too dry.

"If he go to the door when the people are goin' out and gives them the glad han', they say he too fresh. If he don' go to the door, they say he too stuck up.

"No, boss, I don' want to be no preacher 'till after I die.

"The people all the time a blamin' the preacher for not helpin' in the heavenly way, and they won' budge a inch toward heaven they self. I tell you, parson, you'll never git a lot of these people to heaven till you run a Pullman car all the way, with plenty of Havana cigars for the men and novels for the young women, and a French manoo for the fat women. It's surprisin', doctor, how much people travlin' for they health can eat. When a woman say she not feelin' well, you jes' look out. She goin' to wear you down, runnin' for things. She shuah is. A half dozen of them kin' bankrup' a dinin' car, they kin."

"What do they talk about?" I asked.

"They talk about what things they've done seen somewhere else. Nothin' ever looks good to them whar' they is. They don' look the way the train runs. They always lookin' backward, a seein' what they see in Pawree, or Lun'non, or in ole Rome, or some udder ole place. If the train run into a orange grove all a bloomin' they don' see it; they jes' a seein somethin' what they don' see up the Nile, or when they went to the Pyramids, isn't that what they call them?"

"Were you in Georgia when that mob lynched the negro the other day?"

"Yes, sah, the train came through there that mornin'."

"Why do they lynch so many of your people?"

"It's this way, Mistah, a neighborhood gits dull.



Nothin' excitin' is goin' on, an' the people gits fretful like, and they wan' somethin' to be doin'. Den a white man he gits mad at a nigger, and hits him. The nigger he gits mad and hits back. The white man runs home for he gun, and the nigger runs off into the woods for he life. Then they gather up all the neighbors and the dogs and they go after that nigger up hill and down, through the woods and the swamps, and when they cotch him, they swing him up to a lim', to teach him how to keep his place. They say they can't trust the courts, but a court down here kin convic' three niggers in one forenoon, and it takes three months to non-convic' one white man. But they hang niggers and don' hang white men. It looks like some of them people think hangin' niggers is fun. An' I guess it is more fun for them than it be for the nigger."

"A large number of your people are leaving the South, judging from what I see from the papers."

"Yes, sah, they sure is. They are a goin' up North, up to St. Louis, an' Indianapolis, an' to Chicago. They'll make Chicago a good town yet, Mistah."

"Your people don't vote much in the South, do they?"

"No, sah, they don' quit votin' for the good of they health."

"The white man says that the carpet bag governments made such a rank smell that he had to disinfect the negro vote clear out of politics."

"Yes, sah, he says that, but its mighty onconvenient for a white Dimmycrat to have a lot of black Republicans votin' for the other man, when he's a runnin' for a office. Dimmycrats have a powerful appetite for office down in this country. When a man gits elected he gits called 'Colonel,' an' he wife



gits a new bonnet, an' he girl gets a beau. An office is a mighty handy thing down here. They don' wan' any nigger foolin' round after it."

"But your people seem to be happier than the white people."

"Yes, parson, anudder white man say that to me one day, an' I spose it's so. An' when I ask him why it was so he say, 'Do you see them black letters on that white wall?' I say, Yes, sah, an' he say, 'The black letters take in all de light and de white wall throw all the light back, don' take it in at all.' An' he say, 'You black people take in all the sunshine, an' it stay inside of you, an make a warm little nes' of happiness, an' you feel good inside. We white people don' let the sunshine in, jes keep it on the outside, sen' it back where it comed from, an' we not happy inside.'

"I said, 'yes, sah, I guess that's 'bout it, but I'll trade skins with you.' Then the white man he look out of the window and didn't say nothin' mo' 'bout hit."

"You see and hear a good deal, porter?"

"Yes, Mistah, but say, did you hear 'bout that banker's girl a trimmin' the young preacher last Sunday?"

"I did."

"They was all a talkin' 'bout it when we comed up the road. They say she give it to him good, an' I'm mighty glad of it."

"So am I."







## CHAPTER XV.

### THE MAN ON THE ROAD.

**H**E IS AN American production, the man on the road, the traveling salesman, the drummer. He carries samples of goods in his trunk and samples of human nature in his mind. He has his goods classified and his types of men classified. He stalks one man as a lion does a deer, another he watches with the cunning of a fox, another he rushes by bold onslaught. He is all things to all men, if by any means he may persuade some to buy a bill of goods. A good customer is his joy forever, a bad landlord and a worse cook are the dread of his travels. The many things which he suffers at their hands, or which he thinks he suffers, cannot be written in a book—weak coffee, strong butter, tough beefsteak, eggs strictly fresh from two years of cold storage, chicken that crowed the day the Civil War ended, soup innocent of all things but water, side dishes cooked, uncooked, raw, burnt, bitter, bad; surveyors, and samplers of his anatomy at night which get a meal off him without paying the bill, beds which would make a substitute for asphalt pavement. He is at once a martyr and the benefactor of the business world. He may be good, medium, mean, or meanest. He may leave his heart at home when he begins his journey, or he may scatter it around in his travels. He may be a welcome arrival when he comes to town or cause a sigh of relief when he goes. Merchants may cheer-



fully hand him a nice order, or they may want to throw a weight at him when they see him coming through the door.

But whatever his particular type, he is an impressive institution in the American business world. I like to have a talk with him, because he knows the men who do business on the streets of today, however much or little he may know of the men who walked the streets of cities buried in the ruins of time. And I want to understand the men who sell goods to the public through the week and who sample my goods on Sunday.

So when the evening hour was becoming tedious I drew near to a man who seemed to belong to the traveling profession. He was a clean cut man, and looked as if two particular occasions gave him the greatest pleasure, when a merchant handed him a big order, and when at the end of a long trip he mounted the steps of his home and rushed into the arms of his wife and children.

I said to him, "You have had some experience as a traveling salesman?"

"Yes, sir," he replied, "What is your line?"

"I am on the air line between earth and heaven."

"You have a pretty long route; you must get tired sometimes."

"Yes, sir, I meet times and seasons and people that make me tired."

"I understand that you are introducing some new styles in your line; importing them from Germany, are you not?"

"Yes, some originals from Germany and some reproductions from England."

"Hyphenated theology, so to speak. Does it take well?"



"That depends. It goes better in the East than down South. But pardon me, I do not want to discuss my line so much as your line of observation. I have been in Florida, and have seen the big men of the great original trust, and I want to know if I am right in thinking that the business men of America are a good deal in sympathy with the trust idea."

"I prefer to answer that question with an explanation. When a drummer goes into a store to sell an order of goods and the merchant picks at the goods and haggles at the prices and uses all the little gags known to the trade, you sometimes get so warm under the collar that you wish you could push the fellow into a corner and not let him out until he bought your whole line and at your own prices. And the merchant, in his turn, feels the same way toward his customers when he hears all the mean, rasping little excuses which they make for not buying after wasting his precious time. A woman handles a delicately trimmed hat for an hour and then does not buy it; a young fellow with dirty fingers pulls down all the neckties on the line and mauls and musses them and then does not buy. I tell you, the man behind the counter would give all his old boots and shoes for a scheme which would compel such customers to buy, and at his price. Now, that is the scheme which the originators of the trust discovered or devised, a scheme which pushes the public into a corner and says, 'None of your measly excuses now. Stop that carping and kicking and trying to twist down the price, for you have got to buy from me or go without. Don't tell me that you will go around the corner and buy at the other store, for I have put the other fellow around the corner out of business. I undersold him until he had to come into the trust, or quit, and now you will buy from me or not at all.' Yes, sir, the one par-



ticular day and night and all-the-year-round purpose of the trust is to put the public where it cannot help but buy. Therefore the men who are daily going through all the fret and fever and sweat and agony of selling goods cannot help but admire the scheme. Its discovery interested them more than the discovery of a new planet interests an astronomer. I repeat, the charm of the 'holding company' is that it holds the buying public where it cannot help itself."

"But what about the farmer and the men who furnish the raw material?" I asked; "they are sellers and they do not like the trust."

"No, for the trusts are in the manufacturing business, and they turn on the producers of the raw material and make them sell to the combination at the combination's price or not sell at all. And this is the double charm of the scheme; it works both ways for the benefit of the trust and beautifully."

"And this is why the farmers are against it, and the business men of the cities are for it?"

"Yes sir, that is it."

"And there are multi-millions in it?"

"I should say. The promised land in the business world is found between the buying price and the selling price. A big difference in a big business makes a paradise, with waters running over sands of gold, with palaces, summer houses, winter houses, yachts, limousines, private cars, the fat of the land, and all the fat there is on the other fellow's ribs. A little difference between the buying price and the selling price is like a farm with thin soil, straggling stalks of wheat, sickly hills of corn, lean cattle, and pigs squealing with hunger. No difference is a desert. Blot out profit and business would come to a dreadful standstill. It would be like Byron's dream of darkness that I heard somebody quoting the other day"



"As you come and go in towns, what man seems the most important?" I asked.

"Well, there usually is a man in each town who owns more of it than any other dozen of them put together, and of course he is the oracle of the place. But in my opinion the editor of the town paper is one of the most important spokes in the wheel. Unless he happens to be sick abed and about to die he is the livest wire in the place, a booster from Boosterville, a magnifier and a multiplier. What he does not see at hand he does see coming down the road. If the town has 1,000 people it is going to have 10,000 or 20,000. If it already has its 30,000, it is going to be another Chicago. All able-bodied editors conjure with the name of the Windy City. If his town has only one factory, it is going to have a dozen or a score; the smoke of the chimneys will blacken the sky. If there is only one railroad there will be half a dozen before many years.

"Yes, sir, he is a booming boomer. And he is so good to everybody. If the homeliest girl in town gets married, he makes her the beautiful bride. If the meanest man in the town dies, he laments his death as if his heart would break. If the minister preaches a sermon, he calls it 'the most eloquent discourse ever heard in our city.' If Mrs. Brown goes over the way to see Mrs. Jones, he makes it a social event. If Mrs. Smith's niece comes in from Hillville to see her, she is 'the most charming young lady who ever visited in our town.' Yes, he is a barrel of molasses, fresh every morning, new every evening, a sugar tree running all the year round, smiling when his heart is aching over unpaid subscriptions, a borrowed horse with everybody who has a publicity scheme up his sleeve on his tired back. He is expected to do everything for the good of the cause and



to have no cause for complaint, if he himself has nothing to eat and his family has nothing to wear.

"Yes sir, I take off my hat to the editor of the town paper and hope that the dues which he cannot collect in this world will be paid in another world, good measure, pressed down and running over."

"Do you go to church when you are in town?"

"Yes, sir, always. If there is anything that a traveling man needs to keep him in moral repair during the week, it is the church on Sunday. It is a mighty poor preacher who cannot do a man some good, even if he does ably dispense with the text, as the colored brother said in his closing prayer about the other brother's sermon. The text itself is likely to put some plaster in the chink which the week has made in the wall.

"And I have no sympathy with that sneer at the churches because of the deacon who cheated in a horse trade. There are deacons and deacons, of course, but that deacon is the worst over-done man in America. The skeptics and the scoffers have ridden him to death. And the meanest thing about it is that he should be such a joy to them. Why should I or you or any decent man living in such a world of temptation and sin as this want to see a good man lose his footing on a slippery place and go down? That kind of rejoicing comes out of hell. Don't we need good men? Don't we want to see good men multiply and fill the earth? What kind of a world will we have if we persuade ourselves that all the men supposed to be good are so only because they have not been found out? The devil could not improve upon that kind of theory of human life."

"Why don't people go to church more?"

"I have asked myself that question in more than one town which I have visited. Good preachers, good



choir, beautiful surroundings, comfortable pews, and half the seats empty! Sometimes I think that the Protestant churches need a 'holding company' to hold the people up to the rack while the shepherds give them their fodder. The Catholic churches have their crowd; the people blacken the sidewalks coming and going. But the Catholic church has a trust. Talk about the trust being original to America! Why, there was a religious trust in Old Rome centuries ago. In the language of the scholarly evangelist of the day, a bunch of fellows got together in the Eternal City and formed a 'holding company.' They called the president Pope, and the directors Cardinals, and they went out and laid hold of kings, empires, nations, peoples—gripped them like a vise, monopolised this world and the other. Since man began to walk on earth and look up toward heaven, there never was anything else equal to it in vastness of combination and organization and in grip of power. It is still mighty. An infallible church is an attempt at an unfailing, irresistible monopoly.

"The little boy who was asked to explain purgatory said, 'It is the place where Catholics stop on the way to hell; it smells bad, but they use incense.' Without endorsing the little boy's remark, I can say that the trusts smell bad, but they use incense. A smooth politician or wily editor swings the censer. The religious trust says, 'If you resist me you resist God.' The business trust says, 'If you fight me, you fight business.' And a lot of people tumble to the sophistry of one or the other.

"But for all that," continued the gentleman, "and while I say perish the thought that American Protestantism ever should attempt to set up a religious monopoly, I wish sometimes that there was not so much talk about liberty. It always is the neglected



side of religion which calls for new or special emphasis. And liberty is not now the neglected side. There is so much free space in the pews now that the wind could blow through many of them without fanning a cheek, and there is so much freedom in some of the pulpits that the people are in danger of thinking that it does not make any difference what a man believes, and I want to tell you that when the people begin to think that they soon jump to the conclusion that it does not make any difference whether they go to church or not."

When we rose to separate, I said to the gentleman, "I forgot to ask what line you are in."

"I was a drummer," he replied, "until I acquired a knowledge of human nature; then I went into politics, and now I am governor of my state."



## CHAPTER XVI.

### AT HOME AGAIN.

**"H**OME, sweet home!" Everything has a home. Foxes have holes in the ground; birds of the air have nests; tiny creatures gather under a leaf and make it a roof over their heads. Turn up a stone and the scrambling little natives make you regret that you have broken into a home.

And what is home without a mother? Nobody can give such a greeting to a returning boy as a mother. And no heart aches like hers when a boy or girl never returns. Hers is the hardest heartache in all the years of sighs and tears, and hers is the greatest gratification when all goes well. No other one listens with such attentive ear and beaming face to the story of achievement or with such a soul of sympathy over disappointment as a mother.

I went up the step with a bound and mother came at me with a rush. It was the best part of the trip. It usually is. The thrill of the American traveler across the sea comes when he sights the American coast.

She put me down to a warm breakfast, and also on the witness stand to answer a stream of questions. "Did I really like Florida? Was it good for my health? How much had I gained in weight, not counting the tan? How big a fish story could I tell and be reasonably truthful? Did the alligators come



into the front yard and take the pet dog off the front porch? Could the mosquitoes bite through a laundered collar? Did I meet any interesting people down there?"

Then she stopped to take breath, and during the pause I replied that I met some of her former friends. "Do you remember a family named Kingsley?" I asked. "Members of one of father's churches?"

"Yes," she replied, "no pastor's wife could forget Mrs. Kingsley. She was called the faithful woman of the church; always in her pew on Sunday and always at prayer meeting. Mr. Kingsley also was quite regular in his attendance, but I think that he had some serious business worries."

"Do you remember a little girl in the family, ten or eleven years old?"

"Yes, there was an incident which made me remember her. A big circus show came to town one day and all the boys and girls went trooping along after the procession. The little black-faced man who had charge of the big elephant kept prodding him with a sharp goad, and you exclaimed, 'Why don't that big elephant throw that black little rat over the fence?' 'I know,' said the little girl, 'why he doesn't do it; it is because he does not know that he is an elephant.' Then she added in an innocent kind of way, 'you could be an elephant some day if you only knew it.' Her remark seemed to make quite an impression on you, and for several days you went around saying, 'I could be an elephant if I only knew it.' Then you began to get your lessons as you never had done before. The teachers remarked about it and wondered what ever had gotten into you. But what about her?"

"Nothing much, only, if you had seen her throwing a preacher over the fence one Sunday afternoon



you would have thought that she had become the elephant."

"I hope you were not the preacher."

I evaded an answer by asking what else she remembered about her.

"I remember that when we were leaving she asked for your picture. I told her that I could not spare it, that it was the only one I had. But she looked so disappointed and so ready to cry that I finally gave it to her. I thought that if I had the boy the child could have the picture."

"But what would you think if she got both?"

Mother started as if I had thrown something at her. "Has it come to that?" she exclaimed.

"No, no, mother," I replied. "Don't be so much alarmed. That little girl is some woman now, and she is not wearing her heart on her sleeve. She keeps her theological opinions on the front gate, but if she has anything in the way of a love affair I don't know a thing about it. She is a mask when it comes to that."

"She had opinions when she was a little girl. Your father used to call her the little stand-up-for-something girl. She always was standing up for somebody or something."

"You ought to have seen her standing up for me! But what was the matter with the pulpit supplies that the congregation ran down so badly?"

"Well, one looked at the ceiling too much; another looked at his manuscript too much; another got up in the air and stayed there until the congregation lost sight of him; another was so deep that he could only be followed by those who knew how to dive, a kind of submarine preacher; another was too dry; and still another too wet—he told sad stories and shed tears over them when his hearers did not."



"You are not knocking, are you mother?"

"No, I am only answering your question by echoing the opinions of the people. For my part I enjoyed the preachers. It was a relief not to sit in a pew aching all over with responsibility for my own kid in the pulpit. But give them your best next Sunday, and don't announce a series of Sunday addresses on your trip to the Southland."

"Why not? Sermons need a fresh breeze now and then. Straw run through the mills of the ages becomes rather dry."

"So it does, and I won't mind something a little fresh, but don't make it too fresh. I don't want to take up the church bulletin and see you announcing a list of subjects like, 'The Smile of the Florida Alligator,' and similar themes. Make it worth while, something with length and breadth and a reasonable amount of thickness."

I tried to act on my mother's suggestion, to get a fresh breeze along with a wide principle; and I took my text from the words of Daniel: "In the end of the years they shall join themselves together; for the king's daughter of the South shall come to the king of the North to make an agreement."

My sermon was somewhat as follows:

When the Civil War was menacing the land, it was said that we could not have a dissolution of the Union, for that would mean a national line across the Mississippi river. And it is in the eternal plan of the continent that the great river should be for one people, that its ships of commerce should float to the sea unhindered by national barriers, unvexed by tariff or custom-houses. But the war was not far in the past when the commerce of the great river began to dwindle, and the might and magnitude of its trade were displaced by the railroad. We enter a palatial



coach at our station, headed for the tip-end of the South. It is our home for the passage, our eating place, sleeping place, reading place, social gathering place, all. It would mar the plan if we had to wake up in the middle of the night and betray our belongings to the weasel eyes of a custom's collector—an American custom house is a horror on earth. No. The railroads have riveted North and South together. Their steel rails are like the steel rods which reinforce concrete. Every stroke of the wheels seemed to me to be saying with incessant ring, "The Union forever, the Union forever, one and inseparable."

Now note the significance of it. Nature made the river, and it has lost its power as an argument for union. Man made the railroads, and every day their argument for union lengthens, strengthens, tightens its grip. In a word, natural boundaries, rivers, mountains, seas, are not enough for human union, for deeper nationality. It must have the human factor, the human link. The tie which binds is man-made rather than nature made. The king's daughter of the South and the king of the North made an agreement. The daughter of the South took the spinning wheels of the North into her own borders, and the women of the South joined the women of the North in the great temperance movement. Now there is a commercial, industrial, moral and social agreement.

But railroads cross state lines, and that gives them pause. State lines should not give too much pause. They should lie low when these mighty trains come thundering down the track. We are not forty-eight different nationalities. Our state autonomy is one of the happiest devices of American government, for the states provide for variety in human nature. A monotonous mass of human beings is not interesting. America is the most interesting country on earth be-



cause we have given freedom of action to the parts which make the Union. In a sense, state rights are the rights of human beings to live their own life. Let them not be blotted out. But let them not block the great highways of travel, for it is one of the heaven born rights of the American people when they set out to travel to get there as quickly as possible. I am saying this, not because it is strictly religious, but because I consider it the right view of a very live question, emphasized by my own observation while flying across the land.

Another matter of interest which pressed upon my attention was the relation of races. A superior race came to the new Continent. An inferior race already here refused to bow to the intruder, and they were exterminated. We brought in another inferior people who could be exploited, coerced into service. Both races made trouble for us, the one race because they could and would fight, the other because they could not or would not fight. The wars of America were Indian wars, then the Civil War. Mark the significance of this line of facts. The attitude of a superior people toward an inferior people may be the source of vast trouble. No race can do as it pleases toward another race, no matter how great its superiority, how great its power, or how haughty its pride. There comes a day of reckoning, a day of retribution, when all the cries and tears and agonies and wrongs of careless and uncounted years turn into a storm of wrath and sweep back over the haughty aggressor without pity and without stopping a moment to consider the protests of sentiment or the pleas of self-love. The superior powers of the Old World have exploited the barbarian, and they have paid for it in treasure untold, in streams of blood. You may call it divine wrath, retribution, the judgment day of history,



or what you will; it is there. You may even deny it, but the world weeps and men perish.

I tremble when I think of the inferior peoples and realize that our peace depends upon our attitude toward them. They are a temptation to the exploiting spirit. Their undeveloped resources, their untouched wealth invite the aggressor, the lawless lust for gain. Then comes wrong, then comes trouble. The peace of the world rests in the attitude of the superior man to the inferior man. We may talk as we will about the white man's burden and about the paramount nation, the one imperative business of the superior man is to behave himself in the presence of his inferiors as well as his equals. And in my opinion nothing but the Christian religion ever will make him do that.

We love our own class, or our own country. God alone loves all classes, all countries, mankind; and it is only when we get the God-like spirit in us that we love the human race. In the kingdom of God there is neither Greek nor Roman, bond nor free.

There is Africa; there is Asia; there is the Orient; and across our borders is Mexico. What is our attitude toward them going to be? Are we going to exploit them, or give them the hand of a brother? I repeat, I tremble when I think of the answer to the question. And yet again, I rejoice when I think what it can be, what it may be. We are a great people, we can easily be a noble people.

But we are not altogether a happy people. This fact was flared in my face frequently when I was in the procession that seeks the sunshine of the Florida coast. Men knock and complain and grumble. One world-trotting resorter in Florida, full of porcupine quills, can make a score of natives unhappy. If it were not for the money which he spends some of them



would take to the woods when they see the knocker coming. I heard his complaints, his angry voice. Then I listened to the laughter of the black man, his song in the field, the lullaby from his little cabin floating through the darkness of the evening like the melody which birds make in the trees, and I wondered why it should be so. But every race has a little corner within where something rare seems to grow; and the black race has its patience and its cheerful disposition. No nation alone can make a garden of the gods. Each race, each people must bring their contributions before civilization can complete its work. "Up to this time," says one of the present-day philosophers, "civilization has only made its people more sensitive." It has a harder task to make them better satisfied. And here the neglected races may yet furnish a large contribution.

Therefore I repeat that the attitude of the superior peoples to the inferior peoples will make or mar the future. The call of the missionary is a call to Christianity to complete its conquest and a call to civilization to complete itself.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### A MINISTER AND TROUBLE.

**T**HE pastor of a city church is like Job's man of "few days and full of trouble." His days are too few for the many demands upon his time, and he has troubles of his own and troubles of numerous other people. The home-sick boy, whose money is gone when Christmas is near, comes to the minister. The woman whose husband is gone without having said goodbye and has left her to struggle for herself and her little ones comes to the minister with her trouble. The dead beat with a little scheme up his sleeve and a false story on his lips comes to the minister, and he is apt to get him.

It was the second week after my return that I heard a knock at my study door, and on answering it I was met by two timid, hesitating women. They requested me to visit the daughter of an old friend, who was in the city and very ill. I took the address and made the call in the afternoon. The place at which I found the address was a shabby house on a back street, and after climbing two flights of stairs, I was ushered into a front room overlooking a daily procession of poverty and misery. A young woman sat in a chair near the window with her head leaning against a pillow. The flush on her cheeks and the bright light in her eyes revealed the nature of her illness.



"Are you the minister?" she asked.

"Yes," I said, "were you looking for me?"

"They told me that you might come."

"Can I do anything for you? It would be a real pleasure to me."

"I don't know, I don't know," she replied languidly. "The doctors do not seem able to do anything for me, and I guess all you can do is to talk to me."

"If I knew your story perhaps I could talk better to you."

"I don't know, there is nothing new in it; it is that poor old story, a joyous young girl coming to the city with high hopes in her heart and then a wreck going to her grave with a shadow on her name."

She hesitated, turned her face toward the wall for a moment or two and then went on.

"I came from a country home, a good home, and a good mother. She kissed me with the tears in her eyes and a God bless you on her lips. I secured a fair position and was doing well. I was contented and reasonably happy. In the course of time a young man wanted to marry me and I think I should have accepted his offer. But one day," and she paused again, leaned back and put her thin little hands over her face. When she had recovered she went on. "It was a Sunday afternoon, and I went to one of the big halls to hear a noted woman lecturer. At first her talk seemed quite strange to me. I had not heard anybody talk that way back in our country town. But I listened, and soon I was clapping my hands along with the rest of the crowd of young people and older people. The lecturer blamed everything on society and conditions, nothing on us. And how they did applaud. I always had been taught to believe that if we did wrong we ourselves were to blame. But no, she would not have it that way at all. It was the big



city, the environment—I think that was the word she used so much. No young man or young woman did wrong. It was the environment, the slums, she shrieked. And then they shook the building with their applause. And this made her talk wilder than ever.

“It rattled me. To be honest, I rather liked the idea that I was not to blame if I wanted to do wrong, that I never had been and never would be to blame. There is something in our sinful hearts that tells that kind of talk to come in and stay awhile. Perhaps mother would have called it the devil, but the woman lecturer scoffed and jeered at the idea of the devil until the laughter and applause shook the roof again, and I joined in.

“Surely that talk stayed with me. It made me restless and dissatisfied. Oh, if I only had got a good letter from mother that week it might have braced me up. But as it happened she was sick and did not write. Having got the taste for such talk I went to every meeting where I could hear it, and there is good and plenty of it in a city like this. Then I felt my feet slipping, but it did not alarm me, and when my mother wrote that she felt concerned over the tone in my letters I just thought she was an old foggy, away behind the times out in that country town. I was not to blame, would not be to blame, I kept thinking, only society, the city, the back alley or the lamp post, or I don’t know what, would be responsible. I had a right to live my own life, as I read in the paper that a professor said. And when a girl’s thoughts are there, Mister, her feet are at the edge.”

She put her trembling little hand to her eyes again and with her white face hid she sobbed. “I went down, I went down, and I kept going down. And here I am. Oh, if I only could be back a year!”



And she sobbed convulsively again. When she had become more composed, I said to her, "My dear young woman, I fear that you did not interpret the views of the lecturer quite right. Society is somewhat to blame."

"Oh, don't tell me that, she almost shrieked. That was the poison that poisoned my young life, that made me the tempter's easy prey, that threw me wrecked and hopeless on a sick bed. And I did not think that you would tell me that; that is why I wanted to talk with you. I thought you would understand. 'Society! Society!' Don't talk to me about society. Why should I hang all my fate on society? Didn't I have a will of my own? Couldn't I say no, instead of throwing myself like a straw on the stream and the whirl we call society? Does society come in here and bear my pain, my fever, my sleepless nights, my aching heart? Oh, no, no. I have had to pay all the dreadful price. Why didn't I stand up and fight for myself? The consequences are all mine, I had a right to the choice. And I did have it until that fool and fiendish lecturer talked me out of it. I call her a fiend," she cried in wild anger, "because there is no worse imp in hell than the man or woman who teaches a young woman that she is not the chief defender of her own honor. My soul is my own. God gave it to me to keep. Oh, why didn't I keep it? Why didn't I keep it?"

The poor girl sank back exhausted, and closed her eyes. The tears were streaming down my own cheeks, and with a sob in my voice I said to her, "You are too sick to talk any more now. I shall come again tomorrow."

At a floral establishment I purchased a bunch of roses and ordered them delivered at her room. When I returned the next day she greeted me with a faint



smile and a glance at the flowers. "I know you sent them," she said, "and I thank you so much. They may last until I go, for the doctor was here this morning and he told me that I could not live much longer."

I sat down and talked to her about the Christ. I told her what a beautiful life He lived, what a great example He was, and how wise a teacher.

When I paused she shook her head sadly and replied, "He lived a beautiful life, but I can't do that now, my life is gone, blighted, ruined. And what can I do now with his example or his wisdom? I sit here through the day, and I toss in my bed at night, thinking of my sins. Oh, the dreadful sin of it all! And sometimes when I cannot sleep I stagger to the window and look up at the stars and wonder if my dear mother who died last year is in some beautiful land and will take me by the hand. Sometimes I can almost see her standing at a beautiful window and hear her say, 'Come home, darling, come home and stay with your mother.' Then I think of my past and the beautiful city slips from view. Oh, minister, minister, sin darkens heaven. A sin covered soul shrinks from the holy, and heaven must be holy. If only I could get rid of the thought of my sin I think I could close my eyes in a peaceful sleep."

I tried hard to comfort her, but my words did not satisfy the cry of her soul for deliverance from her sin. Telling her that I would call again I went back to my study and tried to resume work on a sermon which I had announced that I would preach on the beautiful world in which we live. But the white face of the disappointed young woman haunted me so much that I laid down my work and took up a letter which I had forgotten to open. It contained an invitation to preach a sermon at a leading college. "Yes," I said to myself, "I can preach to students and profes-



sors, but I wish I could talk to that dying girl. Why didn't I take my theological course in the cellars and garrets of the city instead of in a seminary!"

But then I do not want to lay too much ministerial weakness to the professors in the seminary, for those poor mortals stumble along with the rest of us.

Fortunately there was a knock at the door and a cheery voice said, "I am coming right in, my boy, how are you today?"

He was the dear old Pastor Emeritus, white-haired and with the serene face of an angel, lingering on the shores of time—for a last look at our busy world before he went up to look at it from the land where there is no night and where no shadows fall and the voice of crying is not heard.

I said to him, "I always am so glad to see you, but never so glad as this time, for I have a case on my hands that seems beyond me." Then I told him about the poor girl and asked him to visit her. You have pointed so many troubled souls to heaven, I said, that I know you can show her the way.

The dear old man went and kept going every day until the end came. And she looked for his coming as she watched for the beams of morning after a night of pain. A beautiful calm came over her face while he explained to her the way of salvation.

As she was closing her eyes for the last sleep she said, "I am going home to my Savior and my dear mother." When her father came he bent over his dead child and in shaking agony cried, "Oh, that we had held you in our arms always, that we had never let you go from us."

I said to him, "She is in safer arms now than yours. Her feet will never again stray away with an evil company. She is in that company which God is making up, the company of his redeemed ones."



In his simple words at the funeral service the veteran pastor said: "We double the danger when we weaken the old moral supports of these young souls. Let them take the foundations from under the bridges which carry the railroad trains over the stream, but far more reckless and dangerous is it to take the old foundations from under the lives of our young men and women. May God save us from that new peril made by willful hands hewing at the pillars of the temple! And may the day never come when there is no Cross left to which the pity of the believing heart can point the penitent sinner!"

I did not preach the sermon on our beautiful world as I had planned. I preached on sin and salvation, and told the story which I have been telling you. Many were weeping at the close of the sermon. As the people were going out I heard them remarking, "How he has changed, how he has changed."







## CHAPTER XVIII.

### A LITTLE LIST OF CALLERS.

THE next caller in my trouble list was a young elder in my church, one of those lion-like men who have strength in their faces and a spring in their step, alert, eager. You like to see them move, to hear them speak; there is such a suggestion of mastery in it. The gentleman was vice-president of a railroad company and was supposed to be living on Easy Street.

"There is something which troubles me," he said, "I want to talk it over with you. Some of the high officials of the company want the division superintendents instructed to hold empty freight cars on the side tracks. They desire it done to make an artificial shortage, to make the public believe that the railroad companies do not have cars enough to move the country's freight."

"Why do they want to do that?" I asked.

"To make the public believe the next thing, which is that the railroads do not have revenue enough to equip their lines with a service adequate to increased demands."

"And then what?"

"To make a demand at Washington for a change of railroad regulation and to get out from under all state control and set up full fledged federal control."

"Now I am not saying that there is no need for a



change, because I think that forty-eight state bosses and the Interstate Commerce Commission are too many. Railroads can't stop at state lines. Conductors cannot see them in the daytime nor feel them at night, and the 'twilight zone,' as Mr. Bryan so aptly called it, needs more daylight. What I don't like is this proposed way of going at things. If I want a chicken for dinner I believe in going to the market and buying it openly, and not in throwing a stone at it in my neighbor's yard and then if he catches me telling him that I was trying to hit a rat. When there already is a coal shortage I can't stand it to make it worse, knowing that women and children will suffer because the price has gone above their means. But it is pretty serious business setting yourself against the high officials of a corporation. What would you do?"

"The honest thing," I replied.

"Suppose you preach a sermon, a stiff sermon, on it; that will help me through, for some of them are in our congregation."

"I don't know about that."

"Are you afraid of being one of the fools who rush in where angels fear to tread?"

"Wall Street angels, you mean," I said with a smile.

"Wings of angels don't often fan the faces on Wall Street. But you preached a sermon on Daniel last Sunday; dare to be a Daniel for my sake and the good of the cause."

"And get into the lion's den? But here is the real objection. I have an aversion to preaching on a public question unless I study it through and thoroughly know my subject. A lot of preachers go off half-cocked. They get up and scream about things of which they know little and ought to say less. How-



ever there is a principle here and I can follow that."

I preached the sermon, and when it was over I saw some men looking daggers at me, although there was a little outbreak of applause during the discourse.

At the next annual meeting of the railroad company the elder was not re-elected vice-president. It was said that they wanted a stronger man. Have corporations souls? Sometimes; it depends on the circumstances and the individuals. And then again, their souls are like the material which a minister puts away for his sermons, and which gets lost in such a pile of stuff that he cannot find it when most needed.

My next caller was a brother minister. We had been chummy, and he frequently dropped in. "There is a vacant pulpit out in Chicago," he said, "a good one, and we want to see a man there who is right, one of our kind. We don't want an old foggy there, a man with the moss of ages on his back, preaching the 'old gospel' as he calls it, and all that kind of thing. But the trouble is that the church has its eye on just that kind of a man. They have heard him preach and like him. They said that his sermon fed them—you know how such people talk.

"Now, we want you to help us head him off, for we understand that they are going to write to you about him, and ask you for your advice."

"They have written," I said. "I received the letter this morning."

"Have you answered it yet?"

"No."

"Good. When you write them don't say anything about his theology, but tell them that his better-half does not make a good pastor's wife—we know that to be the case. She does nothing but take care of her five children."



"But that would not do any good," I replied, "for they would say that they are not calling his wife, but him."

"Well then, tell them that he does not get along with his church, for we happen to know that he did have a little trouble with a church once. It is true that a woman who had run out four other pastors started it, but you don't need to explain. Bear down on him hard for it."

"Oh, hold on," I said, with a slam on the top of my desk, "I am not going to do anything of the kind. If I don't want that man called to that church on account of his theology I'll say so, and say it in such cold black and white that the church will know exactly what I mean. If I can't get a man of our kind—or rather of your kind—in a pulpit without sneaking him in through the basement door and up the steps in a mask, I shall not get him in at all. If that church feels that he would be the man to lead them into green pastures, let them call him. That is what shepherds of the flock are for, and green pastures grow beside some mighty old rivers."

"Why, what has come over you," he said, looking keenly into my face. "You did not use to talk so strong. You must have got too much salt air into your system down in Florida. You need to be freshened up, like a salt mackerel."

"Perhaps, but I begin to think that some of our fellows are getting too fresh. We can't throw away everything because it is old. We have got to give the people something for our salaries, and something for their souls. They can't keep alive on barren speculation or the hot air which we blow over it."

"Then you don't want to help us to land a man in that church?"



"No. For all I know, the next pastor has already been called from the foundation of the world. Anyhow, the Lord knows more about what they need than I do. Let them write to heaven, not to New York, for advice."

It was a long time before the brother called again, and when he did call a north wind seemed to come through the door with him."

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My next callers were a man and his wife, a little old couple. The woman did the talking, and I got the impression that the man was a kind of silent sentinel in their home.

"We are from the country," she began, "and are here visiting relatives. Our name is Hood, Thomas Hood and me. We have been married thirty-five years, day after tomorrow. My father ran for the legislature once, and his father ran a thrashing machine. My grandfather ran in debt and got busted. His grandfather ran away with a neighbor's girl and got married. It ran in the family. There is more money in running a thrashing machine than there is in running for the legislature, unless a man gets elected, and my father did not get elected. The whisky crowd was with the other man, and my father was on the water wagon. And he did not know very well how to drive it. His hand was not steady enough, especially after he stopped with the boys at a road house. If Thomas and me ever run for the legislature I will drive the wagon."

"Hold on, mother," said the silent sentinel, "or the minister won't know what you are driving at."

"Well, this is what I'm driving at; we have a son, Thomas Hood, Jr. We named him after his father, and a poet, because I had been reading poetry just before we were married. It was a good thing that we



thought of the poet's name, for it got into the child's system at the start. He began to accumulate poetry when he was a little fellow. And how he could speak it! When the superintendent come to see the school and the teacher was showing the school off, she always put our little Thomas up to speak a piece. My! you ought to have heard that little fellow standing up there before the whole school, and saying:

"Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
Up above the house so high,  
How you must wonder what I are,  
When you see me on the fly."

"You haven't got that right, mother," said the silent sentinel.

"I have it right enough, and I am telling this story, Thomas Hood.

"When I saw how he could speak poetry, I said, 'What a minister he will make some day!' And I encouraged him to keep on acquiring rhymes. Now he is full of it, and what a sermon that boy could preach! And when I told him that Daniel Webster was the biggest orator that ever fought at Bunker Hill or stood at Plymouth Rock and declaimed, 'The boy stood on the burning deck,' Thomas began to talk like him. Now he can say *E Pluribus Unum*, the spread eagle forever, just like Webster, with his voice down in his bosom and his eyes a rolling up. I would like to see him in the pulpit rolling his eyes up to heaven just like you. I tell you he would make the people sit up and take notice just as much as you do."

When I had stopped laughing, she went on.

"You are not serious enough, Mister. You ought to wear a black gown in the pulpit; it would make you look more solemn. A black gown is becoming



to a man who is telling other people what will become of them when they die."

"Get to the point, mother," said the sentinel, "you will wear the minister out."

"Keep quiet, Thomas Hood, I am doing this talking."

"And you ought to part your hair in the middle. My Thomas does, and that was what first arrested my attention and made me think something was coming down the road. He got to parting his hair in the middle, and a standing before the looking glass and tying his necktie on one way, and then taking it off and tying it on another way, and pulling his coat up this way and down that way, and striking attitudes. When a boy does them kind of things before a looking glass you just know that there is a girl behind it."

"And there was, a farmer's girl who lived across the road from us. He thought that she was pretty, but I didn't. I said she had freckles on her face, but he said her father had a thousand acres of the best land in the county, and if he could land her he would be set up for the rest of his days."

"Set up for life, I said, why Thomas Hood, Jr., you have set up with that girl all your life for the last six months, and it is about time that you settled down to farming, or something more useful than courting."

"Yes sir, I think that couple had burnt more firewood than any ordinary family would burn in two years, settin' up and a settin' up. And Mister, isn't it vicious for the newspapers to hit the mother-in-law with such mean little squibs, when every mother-in-law's son of them has burnt up more of her firewood than they are worth; the spoony, good for nothing creatures. And chickens! I've known women



who had to cook every chicken on the place while their daughters were trying to catch their young fellows. It isn't right, Mister, and I tell you when we get the ballot we are going to fill every last office with a mother-in-law. We are, and mind what I say Thomas Hood."

"But I infer," I said, "that you yourself are not in a hurry to be a mother-in-law."

"You are right, that is what I am coming to."

"Hurry up, mother," said the silent sentinel; "this church is paying the minister \$5000 a year for his time, and he can't give a whole day to you."

"Keep still, Thomas, you have made your pile, me and you together, and we needn't worry."

"But, Doctor, what I am coming at is this; we want our Thomas to be a minister, and he wants to get married."

"Can't he do both?" I asked.

"Not if you can't, for I don't think that he is much smarter than you are."

"I realize the force of your argument, but go on."

"There isn't any more going on to do. There is a blockade. He says I am going to get married, and we say, 'If you do, Thomas, your ship can't come into our port no more.' And there we are, standing dead still. He is just like his father, bound to have his own way. If he was more like his mother we could get some where."

"What do you want me to do?"

"I want you to write him, and tell him if he wants to be a smart man in the pulpit and have winning ways with his members, not to get married."

"I will think about it."

"Do, and excuse me for keeping you talking so much; you must be tired. Good bye, and mind your mother."



"A funny little woman," I said to myself, after they were gone. "I hope she will come back again some Monday when I have the blues." But there are others. There is a nice little boy in the family who keeps his hair combed and his face washed—and repeats poetry or "speaks pieces" in school, and then his fond mother thinks he ought to be a minister. She does not stop to ask whether he has great convictions or not, or whether he could find his way through a fog bank of doubt or uncertainty or not, or whether he would know the difference between an old truth and a new fallacy, and so he gets into the ministry. I wonder how many of them there are?"







## CHAPTER XIX.

### WHEN THE MAIL MAN CAME.

**B**LESSED is the mail man. He gives more than he receives, for we take letters from his hand with more eagerness than we send them away. He is a great institution. One morning he brought me two letters from Florida. The first was from Miss Kingsley, rather brief and matter of fact. She said that they would soon leave for the North, that Miss Searcy had gone the day before, because she wanted to return by way of Washington, to visit some friends, and see the Capital. She also said that her cousin had received a sad piece of news before she left, that the husband of the young married woman, whom "you called the lady of the interview," caught a cold in a sleeping car on the return trip to Chicago; that it developed into an attack of pneumonia, and he died a few days after reaching home. Then she added that her cousin had discovered something from the lady regarding the unfortunate incident at Palm Beach in which Mr. Dinsmore was involved. But she did not go into details, and just what it was she did not know.

The other letter was from Mrs. Bamby, who said: "I am writing to ask a favor; I want you to write Bob a letter. He thinks he has got religion, and I think so sometimes, and then again I don't. The other day one of them dudes who come down here with more good clothes than good sense was blowing up Florida, and Bob said to him: 'If you don't like



Florida, why do you come down here with your pockets bulging out with money?' 'To keep you wretches from starving,' the young fellow snapped back.'

"Then Bob said: 'You wasp-waisted, spindle-shanked concern, you don't look as if you had eat a good square meal in a year. Try on my belt.' The young fellow took the belt and hit Bob a whack over the shoulder with it. Bob started for him, but I got hold of his coat tail and held on, and Bob didn't pull very hard, and the young fellow backed up until he fell off the step. Then we both laughed, and the fuss was over with. But I told Bob that he had forgot the Sermon on the Mount. He said he didn't recollect that you ever preached a sermon on the mount, and anyhow a man's religion didn't prevent him from defending his country, and he lived in Florida. I told him that he didn't understand these knockers, that when they are down here they knock Florida, and that when they are up there they whoop up Florida and knock that place. It's in them. 'What if it is,' Bob said, 'I'd like to knock some of it out of them.'

"But he don't have many bad spells. He works pretty hard at his religion, and I want you to write him a letter and brace him up. It will make him walk on air all day if he gets a letter from you. He talks about you every evening, about you and Miss Ethel. Bob thinks you two would make the greatest couple that ever held down a parsonage, that she has lots of religion in her own right, and that you have a good deal of religion which you get out of books, and between you there would be enough to keep the banks of Jordan full all the time. I think so too, but I tell him that it will never be, that Miss Ethel would die for her religion, and that your kind of religion is not her kind, but another patent. But



he says that when a girl is dead in love she can't do any more dying for her religion or anything else. And Bob says he knows that Ethel is in love, for he saw a little blush on her cheek one day when he was coming out of the house and she was coming up the steps looking back over her shoulder at the young parson going away.

"Blush nothing," I said, "It was a little sunburn which she got on her cheek when they were out riding. It stayed on two days, and blushes don't hang on two days. They come and go. I used to have them and I know. 'You bet you had them,' said Bob, 'when I used to say, may I see you home to-night.'"

"I know whom Miss Ethel is going to marry, I said, but I won't tell you. 'I'll lay awake at night,' said Bob, 'and listen to you talk in your sleep. No woman can keep a secret like that all day and all night. It would bring on a spell of sickness if she tried it.'"

"Well, if you will not bother me any more about that secret, I said, I will tell you another one."

"What secret?" he asked.

"About Ethel's cousin Susie, and Mr. Dinsmore. They are going to be married some day."

"That is no secret," said Bob. "I heard them fixing it up on the river bank the night he left. They didn't know that I was so near, and I would have run away but I was afraid they would hear me and it would break up the meetin'."

"Excuse me for saying all this to you, but I wanted you to think my letter interesting. Now write to Bob, sure.

"In grateful remembrance for what you are going to do.

"Mrs. Lucy Bamby."



While I am in my mail bag I may as well hand out a letter which I received from Miss Searcy, written at Washington. She wrote:

"I find Washington a charming city and of concentrated interest. The past is so much in evidence, the present so much in the public eye. Great men of other days still remain in monuments, statues, on foot and on horseback, in the circles, at street corners, in the parks, in the Capitol. They are the prominent people of the place, here to stay and to speak long after our clamoring voices have been stilled in the silence which covers common humanity. I like to look at them; they make the past more real and life more inspiring. It is good to look at that grand monument of the man who could not tell a lie when you have so many people around you who cannot tell the truth. It is good to see Franklin with his long hair hanging over his shoulders, handing out wisdom to men who have so little hair. And I have stopped more than once to gaze into the face of the great Webster or to look at the handsome Hamilton. How deep down they could get, and how far forward they could look. Webster got up early in the morning; Washingtonians get up late. Hamilton looked into the years and reckoned with the strain and wear and tear of time; the Washington crowd watches the clock for quitting time.

"Pennsylvania Avenue is petering out in a business way, but it fascinates me. I think of it as the American Appian Way. For up this avenue come our conquering heroes with millions of captive voters in their train. No Caesar or Scipio ever led such a train of captives up the famous Roman road as come wriggling and kicking after these men who are making for the White House gate. It is wonderful how it can be done on such a grand, multitudinous scale every four



years in such peace and quietness. Caesar's wife feared the ides of March; our fourth of March presents the most wonderful spectacle the sun looks down upon. Therefore I say that the avenue fascinates me.

"The Capitol is a magnificent pile of masonry, which shelters that peculiar body called the American Congress. It is hard to catch the members of either House in their seats. The more often I see its empty chambers the more I think that our Congress must make laws by absent treatment. One day I actually caught some ten or a dozen Democratic Senators in their seats, and at least two of them were giving their attention to the remarks of some Republican Senators who seemed to have been seized with a spasm of interest in the conduct of the administration.

"The Supreme Court solemnizes me. The door-keepers start the feeling that you are approaching the day of judgment, and the row of black-gowned solemnities reduce you to utter humility. It is a relief, however, to look at the big Chief Justice; he is so brainy. Then as my eyes wander around the row and I see the aged faces of some of the men, I wonder if they ever quit or die. I also wonder if any one of them could make a will which the others could not break.

"In the Hall of Fame, or Statuary Hall, as they call it, is a circle of immortals, done in marble, because of what they did in the common mud of American politics. But there are a few exceptions, I mean not politicians, and the most notable is a woman, Frances Willard. The dear old girl! How I admire her for breaking into the line and standing up to be counted with America's great. But it is my private opinion that when women come into their own and have a bigger hand in things around the Capitol some of those old fellows will get turned out and women will



be put into their places. Or else the women will build an annex to the Hall of Fame and have a room of American beauties all their own.

"I stand and look at these people who have been turned into faultless, flawless marble and wonder whether that is not where our dream of immortality takes its start. When men who have risen above their fellow men die, we idealize their characters and immortalize their names. The people in Washington's day thought that he had faults and some freckles on his face. He has none now. Lincoln told stories to half a dozen men around a rickety stove in a rickety old hotel, and some of the half dozen yawned and some laughed. Now all the world laughs at all the stories he ever told and a lot more stories which he didn't tell. Grant's neighbors thought he had a wart on his face, but nobody dares to think so now. It takes death and time to make men very great. While they live here they look up at the clouds like the rest of us, and the rain falls on them and the dust blows into their eyes; but when they have been dead long enough they stand with their heads among the stars and look down on everything.

"'But what about the rest of us?' you ask. Ah, there's the rub. We crave immortality, that is certain; and perhaps because of that we make a wonderful city and a wonderful temple for ourselves in another world. We cannot stand at the head of the avenues in bronze or granite after we are dead, so we fondly picture ourselves walking streets of gold in a beautiful city in another world. We cannot get into a Hall of Fame here, so we make a hall of fame for ourselves over there. Is it all a mistake, an empty dream, a fiction on which we feed our vanity? How it troubles me. What if there is nothing but this life, and it should prove a disappointment to me? And



what if my life should go before I am ready to have it go, like a flower plucked in the bloom and freshness of the morning! Yes, it troubles me sometimes.

"And how I dislike the chill and emptiness which death makes. We went down to Mount Vernon one day, and we found it one of the most beautiful spots that a man ever chose for a home, with the great sweep of the river below and the green fields and the hills beyond. But what a chill of death is there! Everything is just as it used to be, but the people who made it worth while are not there. Everything is so empty, Oh so empty of the living! The chairs are in the parlor, but no one sits on them; the beds are in the chambers, but nobody sleeps in them; the dining table is there, but nobody eats; the kitchen is all furnished for roasting deer and wild ducks and turkeys, but nobody cooks or rings the dinner bell. In a word, it is a case of the dead keeping house. It made me shiver; everything was so silent and deathly and ghostlike—barns, stables, sheds, cattle-pens, all empty. I wanted to sit in the sun awhile and get warmed up.

"We went over to Arlington and walked through the halls of the old Lee mansion. How attractive the big white house looks standing among the green trees, facing the smooth waters of the Potomac! But the Robert E. Lee who came and went is only a memory. Heroes are gathered thick on the green hill which slopes down to the river, but they are in their graves. Back of the mansion is an army of Union soldiers, stretching away through the trees as far as the eye can see, but they fight not, fire not, neither speak nor do, but just sleep on and on in their little 'windowless palaces of rest.'

"It troubles me, I say. When I came out of college I thought I had dismissed all religious questions,



but they won't stay dismissed. There will be longings, and there will be misgivings. Really in spite of my doubts I do not wonder that people sing those grand old hymns which will never die, which take us up to the Rock of Ages. They ought to live for the good they do to trembling humanity."

Miss Searcy's letter was just what I needed, for on that day we were to follow the dear old Pastor Emeritus to the grave, and I went to the preparation of my words to the people with the pathos of her questioning and yearning in mind. She seemed like a leaf on a tree top trembling in the wind. The departed saint seemed like one who had lived in a house built upon a Rock and who stepped from the door of his earthly abode to the house of many mansions. The contrast helped me and the people were very much moved when I spoke of their pastor's great faith and steadfast hope.

But any words which I could speak to them were weak compared to the message his life had been to them, and I was deeply moved by the tribute of their tears as they passed by to take a last look at the face which had so long been dear to them. Women sobbed and strong men shook with grief. It was an hour which seemed to compensate a life of steadfast purpose and unceasing devotion. Husbands and wives were there who had once been near the parting of the ways, but the wise counsel of the lips now silent and the loving entreaty of a great heart had dispelled the cloud and again sealed the golden bond. A man lingered and looked at the dead face again and again. I knew his story; how some years back he had been a coach driver, profane and abusive, and how the old pastor leaned across the wheel of the coach one day and coaxed the man into a promise to come to church; and how he kept coming until he was



converted, and now he was one of the solid business men of the church.

Then came a woman supported by one son and followed by two others. I also knew their history. I knew that each one of the young men had returned from college a skeptic, that the distressed mother had gone to the pastor and told her story in tears, that they had prayed together, and then like a good shepherd he sought the straying sheep of her little flock and never wearying through days and weeks and months he restored them to their mother's God. How the young men were moved as they stood beside the coffin! And what mingled gratitude and sorrow was in the mother's heart. Precious tears! I said to myself, which go with a man of God to his home on high! They are like the incense upon the golden altar.

"He made a great impression upon his people," I said to one of our deacons as we rode together to the grave.

"He was not eloquent when he came among us," replied the deacon, "but we soon saw that he was trying to give us the mind of God, the message of Him who spake as never man spake, and our hearts answered as they never can answer to eloquence alone. We learned to sit at his feet like little children."

I said to myself, "O my soul, try to be like him, try to be like him."







## CHAPTER XX.

SHE READ HUXLEY AND WAS MOVED TO REMARK.

**A**FTER Miss Kingsley returned to the North she sent me some remarks which she had been moved to make on Huxley.

"I heard a sermon," she said, "in which scientists were arrayed against orthodoxy in a way to make old-timers feel that they were traveling on the wrong road or falling sadly behind the procession. So I went to the library and brought home a little armful of Huxley's volumes and had an interesting time with him, for you know what a master of English the professor was, and how clever in an argument. He could be awfully smart and at times frank enough to make admissions which upset much that he had said on the other side.

"In the sermon the minister began with a criticism of the old-time view of prayer. He said that the law and order of nature could not be changed and that it was not worth while to ask God to do things, although it might be good exercise for our spiritual faculties because of the retro-active effect upon ourselves. So I turned to some of Professor Huxley's remarks on the subject and found him saying:

Nobody can presume to say what the order of nature must be. It is this weighty consideration which knocks the bottom out of the apriori objections to prayer. No one is entitled to say that prayer for some change in the ordinary course of nature cannot avail. The belief in the



efficiency of prayer depends upon the assumption that there is somebody somewhere who is strong enough to deal with the earth and its contents as men deal with the events and things which they are strong enough to modify and control, and who are capable of being moved by appeals such as men make to one another.

"Now that is just the way I always have felt about prayer. What is the use of talking so much about the Fatherhood of God if He cannot do anything for us? Fathers help their sons through college and then the sons come out of college declaring that God the Father cannot help anybody through the world. It is enough to make a pious father tired. Mothers go into an upper room and pray for their boys away at school and then the boys come home and laugh at a mother across the table as if she were some poor benighted soul groping along a dreary path through a field of weeds. They are repeating the professors or the college preachers, and the professors are repeating some of the teachings of the skeptical scientists. And none of them knows what he is talking about, if we can believe Huxley's declaration that nobody can presume to say what the order of nature must be. The mother's spiritual instincts are better than the presumptions of the professors, and the boy is safer in the hands of his mother, whether she gets down on her knees for him or takes him across her knee, than in the hands of the people who are trying to put prayer on the shelf.

"The preacher's next attack was upon the doctrine of Divine wrath against sin and of course he gave Jonathan Edwards a piece of his mind.

"Poor old Brother Jonathan! I said to myself; he preached a sermon on sinners in the hands of an angry God, and he has been in the hands of a lot of angry sinners ever since.



"Now, betwen you and me, I think that if Edwards had shown that sermon to his wife the night before he preached it she would have told him to set it out on the back porch and let it cool off. For a sermon on wrath against sin can be preached without setting the meeting house on fire. But the student of philosophy who does not know that Jonathan Edwards was one of the greatest intellectual giants this country ever produced does not know much. He is one of the very few American thinkers whom the European schools recognize. And what I want to say is, that Huxley declares that Edwards' work, 'On the Will' was 'never equaled in power and that it was irrefutable.'

"But of course the principal attack made by the sermon on orthodoxy was directed against belief in miracles. Miracles worry liberal preachers, because, in the language of Scripture, they are great works, and liberals do not want religion to be guilty of too much great work. So I lingered with Huxley on miracles. The upshot of what he said was this, I give his words:

When it is rightly stated, the agnostic's (the man who admits he does not know) view of miracles is unassailable. But the apriori assumption of impossibility is not justified because it involves the question in dispute.

"This is sufficiently clear and emphatic. There is no such thing as an impossibility of miracles. It is an assumption, a begging of the question.

"Nevertheless Huxley himself found it difficult to keep out of that trap when he got on the war path against miracles, because the argument is handy, and other arguments are difficult to handle in the case of the New Testament miracles without undermining the authority of the Gospels in everything else. The miracle at Gadara was Huxley's especial aversion. He



was a terror when he came to Gadara. His discussion of the subject with Gladstone was more of a joy to Huxley than it was to the Grand Old Man.

"But the pugilistic professor lived before the doctors had made such remarkable discovery of physical possession, of germs, bacteria, bacilli, and the other little devils of disease which possess the human body. Now it is all possession. They keep us scared all the time. The evil possessors are in the water, in the food, in a kiss. They fight battles in us, the little red devils and the old white devils. They have their Napoleons and their Wellingtons, their Waterloos and their Pharsalias. It is killing to the people who furnish the fields of battle. The doctors do not look for disease as they once did. They look for the little things which start the disease. If a patient has the hookworm they don't stop when they have found the worm, they look for the germ or little devil in the worm. Nothing is really found out about a malady or an epidemic until they catch the little devils that cause the trouble at their tricks.

"The Master sent the evil spirits into the swine. The experts do the same thing. They put the wicked little imps into a rabbit's blood or guinea pig's blood to see how they work. The Great Physician sent the evil things into Gadara pigs; the expert physicians put them into guinea pigs. It is just a little difference in pigs. The difference certainly is not so great that religious believers need to stumble over it or that Huxley could have made a handle of it if he had lived long enough to know more. The world is learning many things as it goes wabbling along, and one of the things which agnostics may yet discover is that the moral system of man can be possessed by evil actors as well as his physical system.



"In one of the Gospel incidents the evil spirit said that his name was Legion, and that is what the experts are saying now about the evil possessors. There are millions of them, and then many more millions. The scholastics discussed the question as to how many of the smaller devils could stand on the point of a needle. The experts of the medical schools think that they can put a million of their little devils on the point of a penknife.

"What is the use of denying the devil in theology when he is precisely what they are trying to find in medical science? If the evil tribe have a part in disease why can't they have a part in sin? Just listen to this from Huxley:

He who rejects the demon theology of the Gospels rejects the revelation of the spiritual world made by them as much as if he denied the existence of such a person as Jesus Christ. Without the theory of the influence of wicked and malign beings governed and ordered by a supreme devil, the antithesis of the Supreme God, the theory of salvation by the Messiah falls to the ground.

"This is pretty explicit, and it is Huxley, and Huxley is dear to the heart of liberal preachers.

"Next I looked to see what the brilliant professor had to say about an alarming hereafter, against which some of the modern preachers declaim so robustly and so scornfully. It would take a pretty old-fashioned preacher to put it as strongly as Huxley does, especially as strong as the following:

It is conceivable that man and all the higher forms of life should be destroyed utterly, and the earth become a scene of horror which even the lurid fancy of the writer of the Apocalypse would fail to portray. And yet to the eyes of science there would be no more disorder here



than in the peace of a summer sea. Not a link in the chain of natural cause and effect would be broken.

"What would throw a liberal preacher into hysterics does not ruffle a hair of a scientist's head. Having started our planet in a fire mist he is prepared to see it go out in a conflagration. It would be as much in the order of nature as a summer sea.

"Don't talk to me about everlasting punishment," exclaimed the preacher. But Huxley says, 'Bishop Butler's argument, that inasmuch as there are rewards and punishments in this life, they must be consistent with the attributes of Deity and therefore go on as long as the human mind endures, is unanswerable.'

"Certainly it is not answered by heated declamation. The answer to all objections of stubborn hearted sinners or liberal minded preachers to the punishment of sin is the offer of a free and glorious salvation through Jesus Christ.

"The mention of natural depravity has a most disturbing and painful effect upon some progressive preachers who bow with alacrity to the authority of the scientists, and yet Huxley says:

I know of no study which is so unutterably saddening as that of the evolution of humanity as it is set forth in the annals of history. Out of the darkness of prehistoric ages man emerges with the marks of his lowly origin upon him. He is a brute, only more intelligent than the other brutes.

That is, the great scientist did not get any relief by thinking that man fell upward instead of downward. It was all extremely saddening to him. Which is another proof that much of the relief that progres-



sives think they have brought to the human mind is like a sick man's turning over in bed and groaning across to the other side of the room. Really, Huxley found a more painful line of inherited depravity in evolution than is found in ordinary theology.

"Now consider another fact. Huxley took a very gloomy view of the future of the human race if left to evolution alone. In speaking of the increase of population as accelerated by the discoveries and progress of science he said it would intensify the awful struggle for existence, which in turn would destroy our civilization, if Christianity did not help science to keep men together.

"Therefore I am not worrying over the alleged conflict between science and religion. For in the long run science cannot do without the help of religion. And anyhow, what is more scientific than the Christian religion?

"We hear a good deal in these days about the conclusions of scholarship but Professor Huxley purses up his lip and remarks that 'human nature is not altered by seating it in a professor's chair,' even of theology. Then like a boy throwing stones at a window he remarks that metaphysicians as a rule are deficient in humor, or they would refrain from advocating propositions which, stripped of their verbiage, appear to the common eye to be bare shams, naked but not ashamed. (Ha, ha, ha.)

"In spite of all his lashing of the Bible he was compelled to recognize its greatness. 'The Bible,' he says, 'has been the Magna Charta of the poor and the oppressed. Assuredly the Bible talks no trash about the rights of man. So far as equality, liberty, and fraternity are included under democracy, the Bible is the most democratic book in the world.'

"What else could he say?



"I shall close my references to the distinguished professor with one of his saucy observations: 'So far as my experience goes, men of science are neither better nor worse than other men. They have their full share of original sin. Need, greed, and vain glory, beset us as they do other men.'

"Scientists are not infallible, and we are all poor critters."

"Good bye to Huxley, and a good wish for you."

"Ethel K."

"O. K.," I wrote on the envelope as I laid the letter away for future reference.



## CHAPTER XXI.

### THE PROBLEM OF THE AFFECTIONS.

**I**N May I went to Atlantic City for the fresh air of the sea and the tonic of the Presbyterian Assembly which was gathered there. The men of that faith take to this famous resort. Perhaps they do so because it has the broadest board walk in the world, and just now some of them are becoming pretty broad; and perhaps it is because the sea is so inspiring, such a sign of the comprehensive, such an intimation of the Eternal. Jesus walked by the sea and spoke truth for all men and all times. When the Congregationalists finally concluded that they would like to gather the scattered parts of their faith into a national body or a denomination they went down to Plymouth Rock, took a long look at the sea, and then organized the National Council. They have felt better ever since and still have all the liberty that they know how to manage or is good for them.

The sea also is instructive in another respect; it looks better when it is clear than when it is covered with a fog bank. So does theology.

While I am not a Presbyterian, I like to see the brethren of that fold in a discussion; and they are always discussing something big, some fateful issue. An Assembly is an Atlas with a world on its shoulders. They have their bold, uncompromising men, and also their experts at side stepping, or putting something



over when the other man is not entirely aware of what is going on.

Knowing how to do it as well as how not to do it, they have made conspicuous history. They are a study in how to advance and not leave anything behind, how to stand and yet to move. Believing in predestination, they do all they can to help it succeed. Sure of election, they take off their coats and hustle to carry the election. Believing in the perseverance of the saints, they spare no pains to reinforce the perseverance. Knowing that the Lord will do things, they get up early and stay up late to see that they are done. Their assurance is great that no heavenly purpose can fail with the Presbyterians lined up for it.

I say they are a magnificent people with brainy preachers, learned teachers and solid laymen. Therefore I like to sit and look at them and listen to them while they are discussing the universe and shaping the destinies of the human race. And of course they do not talk about the damnation of infants. That is one of the misrepresentations of the people who never can see straight when looking at anything religious. Nobody discusses infant damnation now but the physicians and the eugenic experts, and they discuss it much—the damnation of infants by fathers of tainted blood who send the blight down to the third and fourth generation. It is another illustration of the principle which runs through what the world calls troublesome doctrines of theology. We no sooner get a kink out of theology than it turns up again in the hard realism of life. Horace Greeley was understood to be a Universalist, but in a fit of exasperation one day he exclaimed, "There don't half enough people go to hell." And another liberal came up from the front during the Civil War declaring that hell was a mili-



tary necessity. In fact, human nature is such an astonishing proposition that nothing seems too good or too bad to fail of an illustration in its action and reaction, its ins and outs, and ups and downs, sooner or later.

But I fear that I am rather slow in reaching the story which developed at Atlantic City, and which sent me home in a disturbed and distressed state of mind.

The story follows:

Miss Searcy's father was one of the lay delegates at the Assembly, and she had come with him. Another woman also had come to the city, the mother of the ex-engaged young man. She was not a Presbyterian, but was from Boston. No delegate in the Assembly was there with such a determination to bring something to pass as this woman. She had been greatly disturbed when Susie Searcy seceded from the engagement. Her heart was set upon the match, for she liked the girl, and was vain enough to want to hear her friends say, "What a beautiful wife your son has."

Moreover she fancied herself something of a general with young people, and she also had a feeling that the spirit of gladness in the laughing throng on the great walk and the spell of the sparkling waters of the sea might soften the estranged heart. Therefore when she learned that Miss Searcy was to be at Atlantic City she persuaded her son that he needed a rest and salt air, and together they came to the famous resort.

The good woman soon got in touch with her subject or object and worked hard, with the skill of a flatterer and an adept. And she made an impression—art counts for something, but she did not carry the works. Then a new plan occurred to her. Miss Searcy had a classmate in Philadelphia, a mutual acquaintance, quite charming and fully capable of furthering an attack upon her friend's susceptibility. The



fond mother telephoned to her to come down, and she came the next day. She was a Miss Willingford, and I remembered having seen her somewhere. The mother and Miss Willingford held a war council at once and began to plan a campaign against the breast-works which defended the stubborn heart. But before setting forth the mother thought they ought to call in the son and prime him for his part. Miss Willingford thought it would be a capital idea, and she prepared to do her part with effect. She came for the rehearsal arrayed like a lily of the field. The mother exclaimed, "I never saw you look so well," and added, "I think the two of us ought to make an impression upon him and get him in line for events."

The two women were seated in the brilliantly lighted parlor when the young man came in. Then something unexpected happened. The two young people fell in love at first sight. Both were gone as completely as if a steel trap had snapped shut on them. There was no sitting down to think it out, to pass ideals in review, or take the measure of future possibilities. The fates were at hand, and they knew it and surrendered at once.

The mother retired early, they did not. After that they were inseparable on the big walk. How much his wheel chairs cost him I cannot say, but they found them a constant convenience. He immediately put a diamond ring on her finger, to flash a warning to any other young man who might be headed her way.

The mother also capitulated and they all went home rejoicing. The campaign had succeeded beyond expectation. Did Miss Willingford have the scheme in mind when she answered the mother's hurry up call? Susie Searcy intimated that she did. I don't know, the problem of the affections is difficult.

The wedding came off early in the fall.



Before leaving Atlantic City Miss Searcy told me that she had just received a letter from the Chicago lady regarding the unpleasant incident at Palm Beach, with the suggestion that it should be explained to me.

"What did that woman have to do with it?" I asked.

"It was all about her," she replied.

"About her! That is news to me."

"Don't you know that it was her husband who attacked Mr. Dinsmore?"

"No."

"And I suppose you don't know that the man at the resort about whom she talked so mysteriously was Mr. Dinsmore?"

"No, and how do you know it?"

"Because she told me so."

"I got up and went to the window, and wanted to kick a chair or something as I went. When I saw the waters slamming against the beach it came over me that the sea gets into stormy uproars to relieve its mind."

"Don't take it so hard," she said.

"But why didn't you tell me this at the resort?"

"Because I did not think it necessary, and the lid was on then. There was no opening for an outburst of confidence. You were quite reserved about it yourself, as became your profession. Had Dinsmore never told you that he knew the lady?"

"No."

"And you did not know it?"

"No. It seems as if I did not know anything which I thought I knew. These affairs are too much for me. I don't wonder that somebody wanted to know whether there would be marriages in heaven. He was scared. So am I."



"You will get over it, and think that marriage is a gate to heaven here below. But let me go on with the explanation."

"Go ahead, but temper the wind to Dinsmore, for I always have liked him immensely."

"I shall make it very brief. There was a time when Mr. Dinsmore and the lady expected to live and die for one another, but they were separated by distance and time; and the other man was very aggressive and also had the help of her parents, and the result of it all was that they overpersuaded her and she married against her will and her heart. Neither of them were quite happy. He was jealous and there was a far-away look in her eyes."

"And so he tried to take it out of Dinsmore? Is that it?"

"Yes, that is about it. If she had not been so determined to be loyal to her husband she would not have been so much disturbed by the situation at the resort. He is dead now, but justice to the living compels me to say that the attack at Palm Beach was quite wanton, and cruel to Mr. Dinsmore."

"It is some relief to hear you say so. But I don't understand Mr. Dinsmore's explanation of the affair."

"He probably was rattled."

"Perhaps, a lot of people seem to be rattled."

"Everybody but you and me," she said with a merry little laugh. "But you know," she added, "I could not think of Mr. Dinsmore as other than a man who was the very soul of honor after he risked his life to save mine."

"How much of this did you know when you had that last interview with him?"

"Enough to make me very cautious,—in fact, to cause me to feel that what he proposed could not be."

As soon as I reached New York I asked Dinsmore



to come around for an interview. There must have been something peremptory in my request, for he came in with a dejected, found-out-look on his face.

I said to him, "Don, I don't want to doubt you until I am compelled to do it, but there has been something mysterious about that Palm Beach affair. You told me that it was connected with a business matter; now it turns out that it was a case of an angry husband. Let us get down to brass tacks and have the exact facts."

"That is precisely what I want to do," he replied in a more cheerful tone. "The first and fundamental fact is that when two people are really in love with one another it dies hard. That is what ailed us. But she was a woman with a conscience and a high sense of honor, and although she knew she had made a mistake she was determined not to make it worse by being disloyal to her husband. And for my part I entirely dismissed her from my calculations when she married. You know that is easier for a man than it is for a woman."

"No, I don't know anything about it, I don't know anything that I ever did know about it. But go on and get to Palm Beach as soon as you can."

"Our meeting at your resort was accidental. If I had known she was there the winter could have frozen me stiff before I would have gone a step in that direction. And so was the meeting at Palm Beach accidental. I did not know that she was there until Miss Searcy stopped in sudden surprise. Then I glanced across the flower bed and saw her. She did not know that I saw her. In order to avoid meeting them during the evening I went over to the beach. Unfortunately they had done the same thing in order to keep out of my way.



"The result was that we met. I was so embarrassed that I tried to pass them on the same side that he was passing me, and we bumped into one another. Then he was mad, red hot, and turned loose. I tried to explain, but it was no use. She did the same thing, and it only made him madder. We had kept walking until we were on the pier. She was crying, and he was swearing like a pirate and saying every mean thing to me that he could think of. Finally I told him that if he did not slow down I would pitch him into the sea. He looked at me long enough to see that I was larger than he was and then walked away."

"And that is where you were when you disappeared that night?"

"Yes. In the morning I thought that he had probably slept it off and got back to some sense. But he had not, and you saw what happened."

"But why did you tell me that his attack was connected with a business matter?"

"That was a shifty explanation, and I never have felt right about it since. But there was a man at Palm Beach who had it in for me. I had exposed him in a dishonest business transaction, and he put the Chicago man whom he happened to know up to the assault in the morning. He stuffed him with a lot of lies and staged the attack. To that extent it was connected with a business matter. To make it worse, he had a reporter there to write it up and have it go to the press that Don Dinsmore of New York had been chastised by an angry husband. Fortunately another reporter gave me the tip, and finally I succeeded in keeping it out of the newspapers. You see what a fix I was in."

"I do."

"I hardly knew myself when I got out of Palm Beach. But I do know that I never gave that man



any cause for his feeling or his attack, and I think I can say the same for the lady. I wish you would write to her and get her version of the matter for my sake."

"I shall do so," I replied, "and in the meantime go your way with all the good will of the past."

My letter was promptly answered and to this effect: that it was painful to discuss a matter in which a husband who could no longer speak for himself was involved, but that Mr. Dinsmore had been greatly wronged, that she herself was too much disturbed at the resort, and that the affair at Palm Beach was as lamentable as it was unjustifiable. "Mr. Dinsmore was blameless then and always."

Something like a year and a half later the lady of the interview became Mrs. Dinsmore.

In the meantime, a painful affair occurred in our church. A family was broken up. The husband was a member of the church, but did not take his religion as much to heart as he did some other things. His father had been a successful merchant, and the family connections were aristocratic and influential. The wife also belonged to a prominent family, and perhaps had been married more for her wealth than for her personal attractions, although she was a most excellent woman.

The man's moral lapse was complete. The wife had seen it coming and protested. She wept many bitter tears as she saw the shadows settling down upon her happiness. Friends also tried to warn the man, but it had no effect. He was infatuated.

The officials of the church held two or three meetings regarding the matter. One of these conferences was prolonged to a late hour. I had said that if this were a single case the problem would be easier. "We have dealt with the man," I remarked, "but what are



we going to do with the conditions which this and so many other cases reveal?"

"I am glad," said an elder, a prominent and successful business man himself, "that the pastor has asked this question. Of course, when a member of the church goes so far astray we feel prompted to take him by the nape of the neck and throw him out. But we can't take the conditions which have crept into the business world by the collar and throw them out. They are here; and while I do not want to be thought pessimistic, I know them to be full of moral peril. I knew a man in business for several years, and I neither knew nor suspected anything wrong with him; but one morning on taking up the daily paper I was shocked by the startling headlines which announced that he had been killed in an auto accident at two o'clock in the morning, along with a companion, and the companion was not his wife. The daily papers are full of this kind of thing. It is the serial story running all the year round, ghastly, dreadful. A joy ride, a flood of tears. A fling for young men, broken hearts for fathers and mothers.

"I think sometimes," continued the elder, "that the devil must prize the automobile as the biggest thing that ever struck his road to ruin. He must rub his hands with delight when he sees a big auto coming down his way filled with young men who cannot be trusted outside of a penitentiary and young women whose mothers do not know where they are, or with a couple of husbands whose wives are wringing their hands because they do not come home and a couple of women whose ex-husbands would like to kill the men who wrecked their homes.

"The pulpit may suppress or overlook the declaration that the wages of sin is death, but the newspapers neither suppress nor overlook it. That is what they



publish and keep publishing it as long as a shred of the sordid story can be made to hang together."

"I feel as you do," said another of the elders, "but what are we going to do? We have taken down the old barriers, we have removed many of the old landmarks and have displaced the Decalogue with soft words. America can build navies until our ships of war swarm on the coast, and we can erect fortresses until they line the hilltops, and yet we may be overlooking a far greater peril than that of any foreign invader in the conditions of the home, the factory and the counting room."

"Do you think the pulpit should do plainer preaching about it?" I asked.

"I do," said the elder. "Anyhow I don't like to see the pulpit wasting time on a monkey ancestry, and trying to lay the responsibility for the sins of our day on an animal inheritance. Monkeying with the sense of individual responsibility is serious business. It makes me apprehensive. You cannot collar monkeys which were swinging in the trees a thousand years ago. But you can collar some of these fast young men and bad old men who are hanging around places of opportunity to destroy young lives and damn human souls. Let the pulpit preach damnation as long as men are practicing it. We hear philosophy until our heads ache. We are loaded down with science and evolution until our backs ache. My God! what we need is something which will stop the heartache of parents and hit the deviltry of men."

I thanked the brethren for their suggestion, and then we went out into the night to find our way home. I felt faint when I thought of what the night covers, and I trembled as I thought of the superficial cures for the moral evil of the world which are pushed at us from every side.







## CHAPTER XXII.

### HOW TO REACH THE PREACHER.

I HAD an engagement to give an address at a ministers' meeting on the topic "How to Reach the People." Just after going to the study to prepare for the address the janitor came with the announcement that a man wanted to see me. I told him that I could not be interrupted then, but would see the man at one o'clock, my hour for callers. He replied that the man had a troubled look on his face and seemed to want help. "What is he," I asked, "a tramp or a college President?"

"I don't think he is either," said the janitor, "but a betwixt and between."

"That is where I shall be if I don't get this address ready," I replied, and the janitor closed the door.

When he was gone I relented and hastened after him to tell him to bring the man in, but he was gone. I sat down and made another start, and then the telephone bell rang. Telephones have a peculiar habit of ringing when you don't want them to ring, and of keeping monotonously quiet when you are having a dull, stupid hour and wish that something would happen. The call was from a man of the church, who said that a number of the members wanted to see me that evening. I told him that I had something else in hand for the evening and would consider it a favor if he selected some other time. The truth of it was, I had planned to attend a club meeting that evening and



expected to hear some smart after-dinner talks. But he seemed disappointed and was persistent, and finally I consented to the appointment. The result of that meeting will appear in another chapter.

When I sat down again to go on with the preparation of the address a thought came which jarred me. Here I am, I said to myself, getting ready to tell the ministers how to reach the people, and the people are having a tough time to reach me. I ought to turn the topic around and make it, "How to Reach the Preacher." Then I began to think how we city pastors bar our study doors and hedge ourselves around, and how we are away giving addresses or chasing the Chautauqua courses or attending conferences to discuss ways and means of reaching the masses.

I also thought how we are educated until we are away from the common people; four years in high school, four years in college, three years in the theological dispensary, and then perhaps a year or two in a post-graduate course, to muddle up or unlearn what we learned in the previous eleven years. And we study so many languages that the people cannot understand us in the one common language. I was at a national meeting of the denomination, where I had an engagement to write a review of the proceedings for a leading paper. In preparing copy I had occasion to use the services of two or three stenographers. They were bright, intelligent girls, but the big words which the brethren had used in their addresses proved an unknown tongue to the young women. They said that they could understand the words which business men used, but as for these doctors of divinity they could not always recognize their language. And the young women were a good average of the people in the pews. Are ministers really understood? A preacher rolls the word psychology, for example, from his



tongue as if his people had all been brought up on psychology, as if they had it hot for dinner and cold for supper. But do all, or the majority, actually know what the preacher means by it? I remember that I was coming into the city from a suburban engagement one evening, and two young ladies in the seat behind me were talking about an address which they had just heard. They said the speaker had used the word pedagogy, and one asked the other what it meant. The young lady hesitated a moment and then replied, "It means some kind of a little dog, doesn't it?"

You may call this stupidity, if you want to; but all the same not a little of the language of some pulpits is out of the reach of the average man and woman. When we were little shavers we sometimes put a chair in the pantry and then got the big dictionary and laid it on the chair to reach mothers' fresh batch of cookies. There are churches where the people need big dictionaries in the pews to reach up to the minister's output of words.

But the separation in language is only a small part of it. In his long course of education the minister is philosophized and theorized and theologized, until he becomes a man of abstractions, while the people are full of daily distractions. The difficulty is to set up mutual attraction between them. The people do not always know where the preacher "is at."

And yet the people want an educated minister. That was the bottom idea of the far-seeing Puritans and Pilgrims who started the public school system of America. It made a mountain range of education across the continent. Moreover, a minister cannot confine his preaching to the common level. If he gets above that level he begins to get away from the people. If he stays on the common level the people get



away from him, because they do not think him worth while. So there you are.

The knot which the preacher must untie is how to keep down and to keep up, how to walk in the dusty road with the crowd and to fly in the upper air, how to be the familiar with the common man and be the companion of scholars, sages, scientists, philosophers. It is something of an undertaking.

Nor is this all. The preacher must explain. Of all men he is the most heavily taxed for explanation. And there is a good deal in the universe to explain. Moreover, there is never an explanation which does not call for another explanation. Ask a scientist why material bodies are drawn toward one another, why a stone thrown into air comes back to earth instead of going on into space in search of more fresh air, and he will tell you that it is drawn back by the force of gravity. Ask him what the force of gravity is and he will look out of the window or reply that it is an ultimate fact. The actual fact is that he does not know, and his ultimate fact is one of those conveniences of language which cover ignorance.

Science itself is an endless search for causes. The scientist notes an effect, a phenomenon, he calls it, and he looks behind the effect for the cause. He finds the cause and proclaims his discovery. But the next day a dozen other scientists demand an explanation of his discovery. One thing he never does find, a resting place. Back of tissues are cells, back of cells are something else, something invisible. Back of the invisible, what? Who knows? Investigation and explanation flap their weary wings in an airless, trackless, boundless unknown. It is the limit, and yet there is no limit.

But even greater is the task laid upon the minister. For to material things are added moral and spiritual



things. If he cannot explain, he is not a deep preacher. If he tries to explain, scientists rush at him with horns on their heads and hoofs that trample him into the dust. If he compromises with the skeptics, they leave him in the middle of a desert. In a word, there is an everlasting push behind a minister to go where he cannot go, to lead where he cannot lead and where no one can follow.

As I thought of these things I felt the hush of a baffled mind, the solitude of that loneliness where thought forsakes you. I sat staring at emptiness, humbled by the thought that I could tell neither how to reach the people nor how the preacher was to reach the resting place of knowledge.

Then a voice seemed to speak. It said:

"I have come from a far-away land and the long ago. I have looked into all space. I have crossed vast areas. I have felt the tingle and the throb of all forces. I have seen all the changes on earth or in the sky, all the storms which ever swept sea or land. I have looked upon all the generations which have passed down the banks of the river of time. I have seen all their struggles, known all their joys and sorrows, counted all their tears, felt the horror of all the blood which has reddened the earth. I have heard all the cries of pain and all the shouts of victory. I have listened to all the eloquence of human tongue, all the ribald laughter of the scoffer. I have seen all the men who rose to fame, all the men who fell to shame. I have looked upon all the nations which flourished, all the nations which perished, all the cities which ruled the world, all the cities which sank to ruin and were covered by the sands of the desert. I have seen all their pleasure and all their madness. I have heard all the warnings of the seers and felt all the trembling of peoples smitten by fear. I have heard all the bold



questions of the human mind and all the agonized questions of the human heart. I have heard all the answers. But never have I heard an answer which answered all the questions. There always is a something beyond, a something which eye hath not seen nor ear heard nor heart conceived. I call it the fourth dimension. There is a dimension which eye sees, a dimension which ear senses, a dimension which heart perceives, but the fourth dimension is beyond reach."

"What is this fourth dimension?" I asked, with eager soul.

"In vain you ask the question," the voice replied.

"Tell me," I pleaded.

But there was no voice. It had vanished. I was alone with silence and myself; I bowed my head and said to my soul, "What shall I do?"

Then the voice spoke again and said, "Do the next thing, day by day, hour by hour."

It was enough. From that day to this I have tried to do the next thing. If it was to prepare a sermon, I prepared it. If it was to answer the call of the sick, I went to the bedside of pain. If it was to lead a little child, I led it. If it was to help unsteady feet across slippery places, I helped them. If it was to heal a human hurt, I tried to heal it. If it was to put my hand to a public movement, I did my little part. If it was to join a protest against the world of wrong, I gave my voice. If it was to applaud valiant service, I joined in the demonstration. If it was to learn a new lesson, I learned it. If it was to throw away an old error, I threw it away.

And I tried to choose the better things instead of the inferior. I read the better book. I took the grain of wheat from the pile of chaff. If one man was slow of speech and sluggish of thought and another was swift as an eagle in the air, I listened to the eagle. If



there was a man of theory and another man of performance, I kept my eye on the man who achieved. If I was passing between the weeds of the wayside and the flowers of a garden, I looked at the flowers. If a bird sang a beautiful song as the sun was setting, I stopped to listen to it. If an owl began to hoot in the deepening shadows of the wood I did not stay to hear it. I considered the heart which loved me more than the heart which hated me. I tried harder to find the good in men than the evil. I listened to the voices of the past and the appeals of the future; but I remembered that in the field of action there is no yesterday, no tomorrow. Time is long, but today is the only time at hand. "Today, today!" cried the warning voice of Moses. "I must work while it is called day," said the Master of us all.

"Am I the happier for it all?" I need not ask, for we are here not so much to be happy as to be useful. And I know that I am the more useful for it.







## CHAPTER XXIII.

### A HEART TO HEART TALK.

THE committee which had requested the interview came at the appointed hour. It consisted of three men and two women. One of the men had a born disposition to govern and had freely cultivated it in his church life. Another was a disappointed man and not what the street calls a good loser. The third, while a steady-going, wheel-horse member, had a daughter whom he wanted in the choir; but the fact that she was not exactly a singer made it difficult to satisfy her ambition. If the choir had been larger she could have been stood in a row and looked at, but with a small choir voice counted for something. Of the women, one was known in the church as a rapid talker, especially in a case of preferring charges against somebody. The other was a faithful and pious soul, spoken of as the salt of the earth. I suspected that the manager of the little movement had put on three men in order to balance up with the aggressive sister.

There was solemnity in their voices and the air was oppressive, and I felt that I was not in for a cheerful evening. The spokesman said they were there, not by any action of the church but as a self-appointed committee, that they were becoming troubled by the absence of young people from the services, and that they feared I was not drawing them. "We called you," he continued, "because we thought a young man would get hold of our young people, and naturally we feel a



little disappointment that it is not so; and we have come in to have a quiet talk about it, a kind of heart-to-heart talk."

"That is right," I said, "make it hearty." But before the man could go on the leading sister broke in. "I think," she said, "that you could make your preaching more attractive. Why don't you tell more stories or use more poetry or something that way?"

I replied that, when a man was given only thirty minutes in which to discuss the affairs of the moral universe and the eternal destiny of mankind, he had to be a little careful about telling stories to entertain the crowd. And as for poetry, my mind did not work so well by memory as by invention, that when I was thinking I had to think, that I could not suddenly stop that part of my mental machinery and hook another part of it to the wings of Browning or Mrs. Browning or Tennyson, and go flying through the azure. "No doubt," I added, "it is a limitation, but I am made that way."

"You don't even quote Whittier," said the sister.

"No," I replied, "but I hope he will forgive me; he believed in a pretty liberal amount of forgiveness."

"Why don't you refer to Ralph Waldo Emerson?" asked one of the men.

"Probably because I have not reached the Emerson stage. I am still muddling along with the Gospels and Paul and Peter and Moses. Emerson belongs more to the post-graduate course."

"I used to hear Henry Ward Beecher," said the third man, "and he gave us wonderful illustrations. Couldn't you do more of that?"

"I have been taken for a Beecher but once," I said, "and that was when I was traveling where nobody knew me."

"You seem to make too many digressions," said



the aggressive sister. "Why don't you follow your line closely?"

I replied: "A bird follows a straight course, but it has to flap its wings on each side, and preaching is somewhat like it. The side flourishes make the breeze and produce the effect. But what is the use of talking about such things? This affair is deeper, and we must get further back. You want a heart-to-heart talk; let us try to make it that."

Then I turned to the spokesman and said, "Your two boys do not come to church; that troubles you. Let me ask you, Do you insist on their coming to church?"

"No, I do not believe in making children go to church," he replied.

"You believe in making them wash their faces, comb their hair, put on some clean clothes on Sunday, go to school and do numerous things to establish good habits and prepare them for life, don't you?"

"Yes, I suppose I do, but my father used to make me go to church and I said then that I would never make a boy of mine go to church."

Then I turned to the other man and said, "Your boy has his own auto, doesn't he?"

"Yes, sir."

"And he starts off on a twenty or thirty mile run on Sunday morning?"

"Yes, sometimes."

"And then you want me to chase after him and bring him back to church? Why don't you tell him that he can't go riding on Sunday?"

"Oh, I don't believe in interfering too much with boys," he replied.

"You employ a considerable number of young men in your establishment and if they began to go out in



the middle of the forenoon you would interfere with them, wouldn't you?"

"I certainly would."

"That is, you believe in a governor in your business house where you are making money, but not in your own house where you are making habits and character and the destiny of life. Your boy calls you the governor, doesn't he?"

"Yes."

"Then make good; be the governor."

He looked at the floor, and the other two men tittered.

To the third man I said: "I remember when I preached a sermon to the young people shortly after my arrival you told me you thought I was pretty hard on them, that boys were boys and would have their fling. In fact, you gave me the impression that you expected them to sow their wild oats. Now you want me to go into the field which they have been sowing and reap a harvest of wheat. Don't you think that is asking a good deal of a pastor, when we have that terrific word of Holy Writ, 'Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap'? He shall reap that, and the preacher cannot reap something else for him. Your boy is no exception."

When I turned to the ready talker she showed some signs of trepidation. I said, "You have two daughters, fifteen and seventeen years of age?"

"Yes, sir."

"And they take dancing lessons, and they are at dances sometimes until two o'clock Sunday morning, and they do not get up until about the time you are starting for church. Why don't you have them rise earlier and get ready for church and come along with you?"



"Oh, they are tired," she replied with a stammer.

"So am I, tired of trying to buck against that kind of thing in my leading families."

Then I turned to the other sister and member of the committee, a sweet-faced woman, with a little sprinkling of gray in her hair, a humble look, and some lines of sorrow. "What have you to say?" I asked her as gently as possible.

She hesitated a moment, and then said, "Let us pray."

She knelt down, and the rest of us followed, though I heard the joints in the knees of the men creak when they tried to bend them in prayer. Well, that woman prayed. I have heard some of the most eloquent prayers ever delivered to an audience, and I have heard prayers watered with tears and choked with sobs, but I never heard a prayer which touched me as that prayer did. When she prayed for the young pastor I thought I was a child again, and that my mother had wrapped her arms around me and was carrying her tired little boy home.

We rose from our knees with a subdued feeling all around. The unpleasant looks had disappeared, and we parted with the understanding that they would lend a hand, and I would lend my head and heart to a new effort to bring in the young people.

For my subject the next Sunday morning I looked into the Bible to see what the kingdom of heaven is like with reference to young people. I found it in the parable of the Ten Virgins—"five were wise and five were foolish."

"It was half and half," I said. "The foolishness at the present time may be less; it may be more. Certainly there is enough of it. The kingdom of heaven is not to blame for it; the author of the parable was not to blame for it. It was a fact of life. It was



what the kingdom of heaven confronted in the world. The problem and the difficulty are still with us. If all young people were wise the millennium would be with us before noon. But they are not all wise. Half of these maidens were what a blunt man of the world would call natural-born fools. It may be so now. There are others who become foolish by practice, still others by the way in which they are brought up, or by the books and magazines they read or the lecturers, preachers, or reformers whom they hear, preachers who think that wisdom was not discovered until the present generation was born and reformers who think that their fads are superior to fundamental principles and heaven-born instincts. Great are the advantages for the cultivation of folly! It takes hold readily and runs along easily. Lincoln thought that some of the people could be fooled all the time and all of the people some of the time. Certainly a minister has a time of it with this fool business to keep the dust out of the eyes of the people who do not want to be fooled and to keep wisdom in the people who do want to be fooled.

"But all things work logically, after a fashion, even foolishness. The parable describes the process. The foolish virgins took no oil with them. Being foolish, they were sure to make a mistake, to do the wrong thing at the right time. Nevertheless they thought they were as wise as the others until something happened. It was the unexpected. The bridegroom delayed his coming. That made an emergency for which they were not prepared. They did not have oil enough for it. They had not acquired the habit of preparing for emergencies. That was part of their foolishness. In the animal kingdom there is an instinct which prepares for emergencies. The beavers build a higher dam for an unusually severe winter. The squirrels



lay up a larger store of nuts. The birds fly further South. In human life there must be a wisdom which corresponds to the instinct of the animal kingdom. That is what the kingdom of heaven is like.

"A man says, 'I was a church member and I worked at my religion until my partner, who was a leader in church affairs, cheated me in business, then I dropped the whole thing. I never have darkened a church door since.' That man was not prepared for such an emergency.

"A young woman was a Sunday-school teacher and active in every department of church life, but she married a worldly man as cold toward religion as he was warm toward the fast side of life. Then she dropped her church, her Sunday-school and all the rest of it. She was not prepared for that kind of an emergency. There was oil enough in her lamp to take her to the altar of marriage, but not to the altar of God with a worldly companion. Their name is legion. Their troubles and their tears are countless. Young woman, prepare for emergencies. And so I say to all, Prepare for emergencies. For there never was a time in the world when there were so many emergencies as there are now. Civilization begets emergencies. You business men know all about that. Every spectator who looks at the men on the Board of Trade screaming at one another knows it. The Indian who lived the simple life occasionally had an emergency with a bear, but now you men in the market know that it is a daily business of bears to make emergencies. The world of trade is full of them. Politics is full of it. Social life is full of it. Private life has them. There can be no such thing as the wisdom of life without being prepared for emergencies. The Titanic was the 'last word in shipbuilding,' but it was not prepared for an encounter with an iceberg; and at midnight there



was a great cry, and the mighty ship went down. You never will turn your little lifeboat into so calm a sea that you will not need to be prepared for emergencies. My message to young people, my cry to young people is, 'Prepare! Prepare!'

"They took oil in their lamps but not in their vessels. The clock ticked, the hours struck, and the oil burned. A startling picture of what is going on within ourselves. It is not alone that time is passing, that the days and years are going, but something within ourselves is going, consuming, wearing out, ceasing to light our way or prompt us. I confess that it makes me tremble when I think of it. I hear the clock on the shelf ticking away my stay on earth. I listen, and I hear it ticking in the recesses of my soul, ticking away the very life of my life. Then I cry to God to keep that life within me alive. If that life goes I am only a smoldering torch, no light for myself, no light for others. The Psalmist said, 'All my springs are in Thee. Oh friends, keep your hearts open to God, that He may fill them daily, hourly.

"Then came the climax to the foolishness—'the door was shut.' You and I have shuddered more than once as we read these words. There are those who refuse to accept them. They refuse to believe that the door is ever shut. They demand an open door through all eternity. But let us reason calmly about this matter. Let us look at facts as we see them in our own world, in the life which we are living here and now. I see a tramp coming down the road. A house is standing back among the trees. He turns in at the gate, but he does not try to enter at the front door. He knows it is shut. He goes to the back door. It is shut. A Bridget is there who will not have the 'likes of him around.' He ambles down to the neighboring town; he looks wistfully at the saloon,



but the door is shut. His money is gone, and the bar-keeper tells him to be gone.

"He is not the only one. There is a young man who is looking for a position, but the doors are shut; he has a bad record. A distinguished senator brought a beautiful wife to the Capital, but the doors of society were shut. I need not tell you why. A politician wants to return to Congress, but the door is shut; he betrayed his constituents. A teacher wants a better place in a better school, but the door is shut; he has not made good. A minister wants a larger field, a larger church, and he sees Providence pointing to a vacant pulpit, but the door is shut. He has been giving five days in the week to miscellaneous distraction and one day to preparation for the all-important hour when listening ears are waiting to hear him speak, playing jack-of-all-trades to the community instead of jacking up the meeting house; and in his hour of longing the door of the larger church is shut.

"It is so here, it can be so there. The way on earth and the way to heaven are not so unlike that we can close doors here with our foolishness, our mistakes, and our weakness, and not close them there by our sins, our impenitence, our defiance of God's laws and our haughty rejection of His way of salvation. The shut doors of this world fill it with tears and wailing. But sadder still is it to know that at the last day the doors to eternal safety and blessedness may be shut. All that the foolish virgins had done for the great occasion was lost when it came to the last moment, because they had failed to do the necessary thing. It is in vain that we multiply the incidental things of religion, that we run here and there, that we organize and reorganize, and are excessively busy, if we ignore the fundamental thing, the life with God. There are experts who know everything about religion



except the one most important thing. There are humble souls who know little of the externals but much of soul values. A great scientist, I think it was Mivart, once made the remark that the humble woman sitting by the fireside communing in her soul with God knows more than any of the rest of us."



## CHAPTER XXIV.

### A MINISTER'S WIFE.

**D**URING the summer vacation I received a letter from Miss Searcy which amused me. It was written from the seaside resort where the two families usually spent the hot months. Mrs. Kingsley had invited my mother to make a prolonged visit with them, and my thoughts frequently turned in that direction. Miss Searcy's letter is given below.

"The Breakers."

"My dear Mr. Liddon:

"We have a prominent lady here who is an inveterate match-maker, and selecting wives for ministers is her specialty. She took a course in a ladies' aid society—where they all know what a minister's wife should be—and she feels away up in the art. If I myself were asked to find a minister's wife I should want a leave of absence from earth and search the heavens, where everybody is supposed to be perfect. But this sister is immensely confident of her ability to do what angels might fear to tackle. She is smart, stylish, impressive and persuasive.

"Well, it happens that a couple of young ministers are supplying pulpits near here, and both are unattached. One is a recent graduate from a school of religion and the other from a divinity school, if you understand the difference. They are talented, and know how to knot a white necktie and also how to hook a sermon to a fine passage from Ralph Waldo



Emerson or William Ellery Channing, when he is not too orthodox. The promoter is quite interested in the young men, and the other day she came over to get cousin Ethel and myself to help her in her campaign. 'You know the girls in the resort better than I do,' she said, 'and you can bring some things to pass which I cannot.'"

"All right," we said, "get up a social function, invite all the available material, and we will be there to do our little part."

The promoter acted on the suggestion, and the function started off briskly. But it was a warm evening and the young people kept slipping out to the porch or the lawn, until by and by Ethel and myself were left with the two young men on our hands. They had been shut up in a theological laboratory so long that it was hard work for them to talk anything but shop. After stumbling around a bit one of them tried to extract an opinion from Ethel on "up-to-date preaching." But Ethel replied that there had been only one preacher in the world who could change its date, the one who cut time in two and made it B. C. and A. D. And she thought it would require a good deal of audacity to attempt now to change the date from A. D. to U. D.

"But women change their minds," said the other young man, "and now that the new woman is arriving perhaps a new day is at hand."

"I do not reason about it that way," I said, when Ethel looked over my way. "Woman's habit of changing her mind was part of her subjection in the past."

"What do you mean by that?" asked the young man.

"I mean this: a little boy makes up his mind to go fishing in the afternoon, but his father tells him to go



into the potato patch and hoe out the weeds. Then the little boy changes his mind. On a Saturday afternoon Napoleon intended to go to Brussels, but on Sunday evening he changed his mind, suddenly, riotously, and hurried back to Paris. The Iron Duke had overawed him, squelched him.

"And so with woman. Through the ages of her subjection man ruled her with brute force and squelched her, if she happened to intend to go one way and he wanted her to go another way. Hence she frequently had to change her mind, and the result was that she formed the habit of changing her mind. But now that she is escaping from the subjection and coming to her own, she will not have to change her mind so often. But men will have to change their minds. Mind what I tell you, if you live ten or fifteen years longer you will see men change their minds so quickly and so often that they will hardly know what they thought the day before. It makes a woman laugh to see what a lot of politicians changed their minds about suffrage when the Western women began to climb the mountains with their victorious banner. The politician waits to see what the voters think before he admits that he has a mind. An old senator would not say that a flock of sheep had been sheared on both sides because he could only see one side of them. It would be a weak little woman who couldn't muster up more courage of opinion than that."

By this time the young men were warming up, forgetting shop, becoming human-like.

"Now let me tell you something," said the handsomer of the two with vigor. "Young women will have to change their minds about extravagance or young men will not marry them; and don't you forget it."



"I won't, but where have you been wandering to and fro on this mundane sphere of ours that you have not seen the young men picking the most extravagant dressers for wives? A lot of them won't turn a corner of an eye toward a plainly dressed girl. Look at my cousin there; she dresses plainly for her station, and she can't get married to save her life."

The young men roared, and one of them looked as if he wanted to go right over and propose to her, but he was wise.

"You have performed some marriages perhaps," I went on, "and you know that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like the brides who come before a minister. Dress up, marry off, that is the way it goes. But the trouble is that men want women a hundred per cent dressed on a ten per cent allowance. They want a wife to look stunning, and are stunned stiff when the bills come in."

"How many hats do you think a woman should have in a year?" asked one of the young men nervously.

"A dozen or fifteen, I should say, wouldn't you, cousin?"

"Oh, more than that; two dozen, I think."

The young men got right up and left so suddenly that they hardly stopped long enough at the door to say good-evening.

We went home laughing, and had to tell the promoter that finding mates for ministers was not in our line. Soberly, I should say, that if anything belongs to the sphere of Providence it is that. There are such depths of devotion in a woman's heart that I do not like to think of any meddling in the matter.

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The incident stirred up my mother, and she wrote me one of her solicitous letters.



"You are not safe, John," she wrote. "I agree with the old politician who said there are too many things going on in these days, and trying to capture young ministers in matrimonial schemes is one of them. But I am beginning to think that your prolonged stay in Florida was not all for your health, nor for fishing, nor for the songs of the mocking birds. I suspect that a little bird was singing in your heart. Anyhow, I should not blame you if that was the case, for these two girls are very attractive. I think one of them was born to be a minister's wife, and I remember now that your father used to think so when she was a little girl. He made quite a pet of her, and of course he was flattered when she remarked one day that she would rather listen to men talk than to women, because they know more. But she idolizes her mother, and that is a good sign. And there is another good sign which you would hardly suspect under the circumstances. She is a good cook. I asked Mrs. Kingsley the other day how it happened that Ethel learned to cook when there was so much help around. 'She learned to cook when she was a little girl,' replied her mother, 'and we were too poor to hire help. I was ill for a couple of months and when I recovered I found that my little girl had become a pretty good cook. I asked her how she learned, and she said that she studied the cook book and kept her eye on her papa when he was eating his dinner.

"I tell you, John, that is the kind of a wife a minister wants, one who keeps her eye on him when he is eating. A minister ought to enjoy his food; it makes him better natured. Spurgeon used to say that to be a real good pastor a minister should have a capacious stomach. I don't draw the line at the stomach or measure a minister's capacity for usefulness by his belt, but I do hold that the English idea of a man of



the house is right, namely: that inasmuch as he is the provider and the mainstay of the family he ought to be kept fit. And if a young minister has a chance to get a wife who could cook a good dinner or prepare a big sermon when he is sick or tired or lazy, he ought to jump at the opportunity.

"Don't think that I am arguing for anybody, for I don't want to over-influence you, but I must tell you another thing. As I already have said, she likes people who know something; and she says that ministers know more than any of them, if they have been out of the seminary long enough to forget some things; that they average up better than other classes of men, can talk on more subjects, make better after-dinner speeches, and get up more discourses. She says that a politician uses the same speech from one end of a campaign to the other, stories, jokes, alleged jokes and all; but a preacher comes up every Sunday with something new, or at least turned inside out, or with new tucks and frills; and that preachers can draw more people more regularly and from age to age than any other class of speakers.

"I am mentioning these things, my dear boy, not with any special design, but because it is such encouraging talk for ministers. And, of all things, a minister needs a wife who will encourage him instead of nagging him. I made that mistake with your father when we were first married. I thought it would improve him if I told him where the weak points were—it is easy, you know, to tell somebody else how not to do a thing. But one day a motherly woman, whose encouraging smile always fell like a sunbeam on a minister's path, said to me: 'You criticise your husband too much. Don't you know that every time you pick at his sermons you chip off a little piece of his courage, and by and by he will not have any courage left?'



On the tombstone of more than one minister it could be written, "Here lie the last remains of Rev. Blank Failure. His better half picked at his sermons until he died of infantile paralysis." "

"After that I could hardly wait until the next Sunday. I was so eager to tell my man that he had preached the best sermon I ever heard in my life. There are better ways for a wife to bring up her ministerial husband than by roasting his sermons for Sunday dinner.

"The little girl who told you that you could be an elephant if you only knew it would surely be a good helpmeet."

I sat right down and wrote to mother that if she had seen that little girl stirring up the East Coast of Florida the last Sunday I was there, she would wonder how they got enough of my remains to send them home.

Mother replied that she had not heard anything about the incident, and that the family always spoke hopefully of me. But whether or not Ethel was spoken for she could not say. "Her mother told me the other day," she continued, "that her locket might throw some light on the matter, if anybody knew whose face was in it, but she had never been able to find that out."

Then she added, "A young Mr. Rosslyn was here a few days, and both the girls seemed to admire him. Ethel said that she liked him for his sister's sake; but I don't know about a girl's liking a handsome young man for his sister's sake. His father is in Congress, you know, and he is ambitious to succeed him some day. He certainly is attractive."

Of course, this last observation was extremely consoling.







## CHAPTER XXV.

### A THEOLOGICAL ROUGH AND TUMBLE.

The intellectual powers through words and things  
Went sounding on, a dim and perilous way.

—*Wordsworth.*

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There are wanderers o'er eternity  
Whose bark drives on and on, and anchored never shall be.  
—*Byron.*

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“**W**HAT are you preaching that kind of stuff  
for?”

This question was fired at me by a liberal brother at the Monday meeting of our ministerial coterie and was prompted by the report of a sermon in the morning paper.

“What was the matter with it?” I asked.

“Matter with it? It is dead, and if there were any grave clothes left it would be buried.”

“I can't throw everything overboard.”

“You will have to shed some of your excess baggage if you are going to be a progressive preacher,” he said with a toss of his head.

“I am not going to the jumping off place just to be a progressive preacher. The old mountain stage driver said that he did not try to see just how near he could go to the edge of a precipice without going over, but kept as far away as possible. That was good horse sense, but some of you fellows try to see how near to nothing you can get and not fall out of your pulpits.”



"You seem to have changed some."

"I have. So did Paul; so did Luther; so did Wesley. It is a heaven-born right when a man finds that he is going the wrong way, and preaching is on the wrong track when it is headed toward negation, doubt and denial."

"That is only theoretical, metaphysical, and not the practical part of preaching."

"I don't think so. It is fundamental in the Christian religion that God is not on the side of the impenitent sinner, but is on the side of the penitent man. Your new departure seems to me to be in the direction of more favor to the impenitent man and less sympathy for the penitent man. It makes sin less sinful and the consequences less dangerous. And it makes less of the death on the Cross for the man who looks at it through penitent tears. It balks at the great hymns of atonement and reconciliation and deliverance from guilt which have thrilled penitent souls through all time.

"We want a note of reality, not mere sentiment."

"The mightiest note of reality ever heard in preaching is that cry, 'Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.' But that is not the cry of the new preacher. He has put the soft pedal on it, and he is not preaching 'that fear of God which searches the heart.' He is more concerned to have men repent of belief in some of the things the Bible teaches than to repent of the things which the Bible forbids."

"Miracles, for instance! Only women and children believe in miracles!"

"Hold on now, don't be brash. Did women run after Jesus Christ to perform miracles in His day as men did? You could number the women on the fingers of one hand, but men were after Him all the time. They tore the roof off the house to get at Him.



Don't you know that a man can't stand it to be sick? He wants to get out of doors. A woman can stand it, and she did not begin to scream for a miracle as soon as Jesus came near. And don't you know that a man wants a demonstration of power? And the miracles were demonstrations of power. Little boys stand at their mothers' knees and hear the story of the miracles, and then they go away to heathen lands to become medical missionaries and to change the empires of darkness to kingdoms of light. They have caught the idea of the heavenly transforming power of Christianity. Liberalism has no sense of conquering power. It never has had the courage or the will to tackle heathendom."

"Stop, before you get out of breath. Give yourself a chance to think. We think."

"The old slur again! You are the people who think, but what on earth do you think about that the rest of us cannot think? Are there wheels in your heads which are not in ours."

"You believe and then think. We think and then believe."

"You are mighty smart if you can think before you believe anything; smarter than the scientists, for they say that their minds wont work in an investigation unless they have a hypothesis, and a hypothesis is a something believed or assumed as true until it is proved otherwise. Who is the more scientific? Really now, can a man think until a belief in something gives him a starting point?"

"We are for freedom of belief; you are not."

"Certainly I am, so much so that I think a man should be free to believe an old truth if he thinks it is true. Can you say as much?"

Before he could answer, a little man in a corner



piped up, "What have you done with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?"

"Put them with other myths and legends."

"Poor Jacob!" said the little man, "Esau scared him out of the country in his day, and now you have put him off the map. He ought to have climbed that ladder and escaped when he had a chance."

"How many Isaiahs have you now?" asked another member.

"I don't know. Haven't counted them lately."

"I suppose the hen is still on the nest; but what about Polly Chrome's Bible? How many colors is it to have this season?"

"That depends on the critics."

"What is Q doing with Matthew, Mark and Luke? I want to get the cue so that I can understand the Gospels."

"I am not fully prepared to say what the latest conclusions of the scholars are regarding him."

"You mean the German scholars?" said another brother.

"For the most part."

"And they do your thinking for you? Is that it?"

"They can think."

"You know where their higher critics started, don't you? With the assumption that nothing in the Bible which contains a supernatural element can be accepted as historical."

"Yes."

"And you know that this means a conclusion formed before investigation instead of after?"

"Go on."

"And you know that such history as some scholar thinks it ought to have been three or four thousand years ago is a pretty cheap performance?"

"It is philosophical."



"But philosophers in study gowns cannot make history thousands of years after it has been made by men out on the firing line, by Tom, Dick, and Harry, and in any old way that happened to be most convenient at the time."

"How about the missing link?" asked the waggish little man in the corner, "has it been found?"

Here another liberal brother broke into the conversation with the reply: "Some bones have been found, but the experts have not yet finished their cross-examination of them."

"It seems queer to me," said the little man, "that you are always trying to get back to a monkey ancestry, always a pining and a-longing for the old plantation and the old folks at home?"

"Well, we are not missing some of the links," said the liberal brother with an arch look, "the links between our propaganda and the schools and places of influence. The scholars are with us, the critics and the experts are with us, and the strong men of the pulpits are coming our way."

"And it did not just happen so," put in a conservative brother who had so far been silent. "The game has been played with the skill of artists. Men of the new views have been worked in at every door, put on committees, on programs, in secretaryships, in pulpits, put at the crank of every machine which was grinding things. You have been as wise as serpents and as harmless as eagles when they swoop down on the flock and pick up the lambs. I don't admire your theology, but the skill with which you have staged the game and played your part is wonderful."

"I trust that there is nothing personal in these remarks," said the chairman with bristling tones.

"No," replied the brother, "I am only alluding to those to whom I refer. But what are you trying to



bring about? Do you want another slump to Unitarianism? That would be idiotic."

"We want progress wherever it takes us."

"At the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a reaction to Unitarianism. Now at the beginning of the twentieth century there is another slump. Do you call that progress? The orthodox churches saved the day that time by heroic devotion and wonderful activity. They made the century the greatest in missionary enterprise and mighty movements that Christendom ever has seen. Are you going to spoil it all by compelling them to do their work over again? What are you driving at, anyhow?"

"We want a religion which the modern man can believe."

"You don't know the modern man, and you don't know that you don't know him, which makes it worse. The great Frederick's reply to the man who proposed a new religion was that he did not know men. That is what seems to be the matter now. You do not know men."

"Whether we know them or not we are not trying to preach a medieval theology to them."

"Don't be too sure of that. Medieval theology was a theology of works, a theology against which Luther arrayed the Reformation and brought in the modern period. You reject his doctrine of justification by faith and go back to the old medieval doctrine of salvation by works."

"We believe in salvation by character."

"Character is a product of salvation, not a cause of it. Salvation in order to character and good works is the order of God's plan of redemption."

"What difference does the order make?"

"Simply the eternal difference that a cause must go before the effect."



"We go back of Paul to Christ."

"No you don't; you go back of Paul to Judaism. Paul was converted from Judaism to faith in a crucified and risen Christ. When you go back of Paul you go back to what he came out of. The two central points of the Christian religion are the Cross and the Resurrection. Paul magnifies both; you lessen the significance of both. You ought to know that there are only two general types of religion in the world, Judaism and the Christianity of the Cross and the Resurrection, and that the age-long struggle is between these two. Candidly now, is not your new theology lining up on the off side of this struggle?"

"We believe in a religion of life."

"Very well, but how can you have a religion of life without religious life in the souls of men? You cannot gather fruit from dead trees, and if men are dead in trespasses and sin they must be quickened into spiritual life before there can be religion of life."

"We have no use for creeds and dogmas."

"Which simply means that you have no use for the other man's creeds and dogmas. A man might as well say that he has no use for a backbone as for a religious believer to say that he has no use for a creed. If his religion has any backbone it will have a creed. You say that you are the people who think. What a lot of superfluous, vapid thinking you must do if you never arrive at a creed. It is a waste of brain matter."

"Christianity had become too narrow; we are broadening it out."

"Christianity had gone to China, to India, to the cannibals of the South Sea Islands, to the Bantus of Africa, the Esquimaux of the frozen North; and that was about as broad a reach as it could make without getting off the edge of the earth."



"But it saved individuals; we propose to save society."

"Let us know when you have saved society with a mass of unsaved individuals, and we will come around and see how you did it. But you are evolutionists, and, as Huxley tells us, Darwin regarded his survival of the fittest as the saving of the strongest individuals from the wrecks and convulsions and smash-ups and droughts and floods and disasters and destructions which swept the world clear of its myriads. You should not go back on your great authority."

"But don't you believe in social salvation?"

"Certainly, but there never was any great uplift or forward movement or improvement of human affairs which did not start with individuals and work through individuals."

"Nevertheless, individuals cannot live alone; they must live in the state and community, and therefore we must try to save these in order to be safe ourselves."

"Just so, and if ever there was a people who believed in the individual it was the Puritans and the Pilgrims, and yet no other people ever did so much to save the state from despotism, the family from tyranny, the people from ignorance and the democracy from wrong and oppression."

"Oh, I suppose we shall never hear the last of the Puritans and the Pilgrims."

"They were of the kind that last, and did things which last."

"They made hard work out of it."

"It takes hard work to make good things grow or go."

"Every kind of man has his day, and now the Puritan's day is passing, and a new day is at hand."

"Do you mean a day which praises what the Puri-



tans did and denies the beliefs which made him do it?"

"We can drop some of his beliefs and not miss them."

"What, for instance?"

"Such things as the Virgin Birth, if you insist on particulars. It is not necessary or vital to believe that."

"But it is vital to know whether you decline to believe it because it was supernatural. If you are hostile to the supernatural you cannot be a constructive or positive teacher of the life of Jesus Christ as told in the Four Gospels, for they are full of the supernatural. When you begin by denying the Virgin birth you are pretty sure to go on to a denial of his divinity and to end by denying his resurrection."

"We think there never was such another being on earth as Jesus Christ."

"Then why cannot you believe that He was born differently from other men?"

"It would not be scientific."

"You mean that it would not be according to your idea of evolution?"

"Yes."

"But the master type which evolution produced along the line of animal development always was a conqueror by force. And the mighty men were conquerors by force, fighters, the strong crushing the weak, killing, enslaving, and all that. The world was black with it when Christ was born, the empire over Him reeking with it, and his own nation under the heel of it. The very theory of evolution itself upsets the idea that out of such an environment as that, out of such a past as that, out of such a human welter, it could produce such a being as Jesus Christ. Surely it was not a case of 'natural selection.' Man was a fighter, it was in his blood from primitive days and heated by



incessant practice. Jesus was not a fighter. He was just the opposite of the old conquering, crushing type. How do you account for the amazing difference, a difference so great that it has put its spell on all time? How does the Bible account for it? The Bible says that he was not born like these other fighting animals. Something was left out of the old process. Therefore the result was different. There was a new kind of being in the world. The Lord Himself does not claim to have been able to make a Savior for mankind out of such old material as he found on the man-side of the human race. The Virgin birth seems to have been a Divine necessity. It fits the rest of the story. It lines up with a vast, immeasurable purpose. It furnishes a better explanation of so tremendous a fact as the person of Jesus Christ than the desperate exegesis of critical commentators or the weak denials of that class of people who never think a subject through. The common mind has accepted it because it is a law of human reasoning to demand a very great explanation for a very great event or fact. And men do not naturally believe that the Redeemer of their souls, the Prince of peace and the Lord of Glory, is to be accounted for by the same process of nature that made the lion king of beasts or the eagle ruler of the air."

"But we recognize that there is an intellectual revolt against the old theology," said a liberal brother who had so far suppressed himself, "and the new theology is an attempt to appease it and give the modern man something which he will believe."

"Now you are where I want to put in another word," I interrupted. "You have struck another point of my departure from the New Theology. I became convinced that it was a surrender along the line of something more for something less, of something greater for something smaller, a belief here, a belief



there, something positive for something negative, a conviction for a doubt, a divine element for a human element, a doctrine which comforted believers for a doctrine convenient to unbelievers, plain language of Scripture for the pulverized language of criticism, texts full of strong meaning for emasculated texts, for husks which did not mean anything, great promises for faint possibilities, mountain ranges for molehills. There was no great, penetrating power in it. My spiritual needs seemed to go far below it and my yearnings far above it. I could not take it to souls in the agony of sin. It seemed to make everything provided for human salvation less, while all my experience and observation showed me that sinful human beings need a very great salvation.

"There is a revolt against God," I added, "which is deeper than any revolt against creeds, and until that is reached the more theology compromises the more it will have to give up, until there will not be enough of it left to justify the support of a divinity school to split hairs over it."

"You always are talking about the result or consequences of belief," replied the brother. "I think we should be intellectually honest, whatever the results. If straight thinking disturbs some twisted little minds we are not responsible for it."

This remark fired up the snappy little brother in the corner again, and he shot back the following: "I don't take much stock in soft words for hard facts, in calling back-sliding a revolt. You know and I know that a man can back-slide head-foremost as well as the other end to. There are all kinds of back-sliding. One man back-slides in a horse trade, another when he is weighing groceries, another when he is swapping religious beliefs, trading off his faith for a fad, or giving up something which he can stand on for a speculation



up in the air; but it all comes out at the same no-account place. Gladstone used to say that there is a sleight of heart as well as a sleight of hand, and the old man had considerable information."

"What is the use of talking so much about the modern man," interrupted another brother, "when half the human race is still swallowed up in heathendom, and half of the other half varnished savages or tailor-made barbarians? They all need the Gospel, and I am going to keep on preaching the Gospel."

"And may your days be long on earth," said the chairman with a smile, "and may you hear the great 'Well Done' in that day. I am a liberal, as you know," he continued, "but I am not an illiberal liberal, and I confess that we cannot trust everything in religion to the intellect or to philosophy. We need to heed the words of Tennyson:

"Hold thou the good; define it well;  
For fear divine philosophy  
Should push beyond the mark and be  
Procuress to the lords of hell."

"I also confess that there is deception in this incessant demand for something new in religion. In my study of comparative religion I have found the Chinese sages reaching the conclusion that what man needs is a new heart. Without that any new religion will prove as futile as an older religion. It amounts to little for a man to say that his head is in a revolt against the old theology if it is not in revolt against the old heart. We cannot be having new religions or new theologies all the time, but we can be making new hearts all the time. And new hearts will make the much longed for new heaven and new earth."



## CHAPTER XXVI.

### BROTHER AND BOTHER.

**T**HEY come as brothers with a bother. Every minister knows them. A pastor in a large city knows more of them. They come smoothly, softly, with words on their lips, flattering words and other words. They beam on you and proceed to bore you. They warm up as they go along and monopolize the enjoyment of the visit.

A man came to me who had been hearing a self-appointed prophet preaching that the end of the world was at hand. He was full of it, running over. He thought that we were just there. "The end is near!" he exclaimed, and then looked eagerly for me to become excited and was disappointed when I did not excite.

I told him that the world had been coming to an end ever since I could remember and had never come to an end yet. The catastrophe always missed connection or went around our planet, whatever it might have done to some other world.

"But didn't the Master tell us to watch for the end of the world?" he asked.

"No," I replied, "He told us to watch ourselves, to watch against sin, and weariness and apostacy, and leave the winding up of the world to its Maker."

"But this prophet quotes from Professor Fiske, and Fiske used to be a great authority up our way," he said.



"Yes, I know that Fiske has a passage in one of his volumes which bristles with catastrophe; and, as I remember, he sees a great conflagration which the planets will start when they leave their places and plunge into the sun. But Fiske was in no hurry about having it come off—he put it a long way in the future. You are in a hurry."

"It is coming soon," persisted the man.

"If you have no doubt of it," I said, "you are just the man I want to see. We are looking for a parish house for some mission work over your way, and you own a big house there; suppose that you let us have it for our work, for you won't need it in a little while. We will take the risk on an immediate end of things."

This proposition sobered the man down, and he went away wise in worldly matters, if not in end-of-the-world matters.

The next brother on the bother list was a woman, who came full of a progressive dress reform scheme. "She was determined, she said, "to have women clothed and in their right minds at the same time."

"I should smile," I replied.

"But I want your help."

I demurred. I told her that I was having my hands so full with the brethren that I did not have time to take up a forward movement in dress with a sister. "If I had a wife," I added, "it might be different. She could help me in the matter."

"Different! Help you! You couldn't do a thing if you had a wife. When your wife began to ask you whether the new style of dress was to be gored in the back and cut bias, you wouldn't know where you were at. She would run you up a tree the first thing and keep you there until you promised to let dress reform alone and saw wood for the pulpit fires. Why, young man, it is because you don't have a wife that I came



to you. I had been hunting the city over for an unmarried minister to take up the matter with me, and when they told me of you, I made a bee-line for you."

"I suppose you have some marriageable daughters," I said, "and you are eager to start this reform before they have to be fitted out for the great event in a young woman's life?"

"Yes, sir, I have. I have two lovely girls, if their mother does say it. I wish you could see them."

Fortunately at this embarrassing moment my assistant knocked at the door and admonished me not to forget that I had a wedding ceremony to perform at that hour, and the interview closed.

The next day a progressive politician called. He said that ordinarily he did not believe in mixing religion and politics or that the pulpit should deal in partisan affairs, but when such a heaven-born cause as his needed the support of every righteous man in the community he felt no hesitation in appealing to an influential pastor.

I asked him to outline his scheme, to state the principles of the new movement, which he did with alacrity, enthusiasm, and at full length. When he finally was through, I said: "We have heard all these things for years. You are simply offering the public canned goods with a new label."

"I am not prepared to admit that," he replied, "but even if we are, is not that about what some of your new religious movements are—canned goods, old as the years, but with new labels? And the public does not know the difference."

"Some of the public do not, but men of political acumen know the difference in politics, and men of spiritual perception know the difference in religion. But why is there not more progress in politics?"

"The bosses are in the way."



"What is a political boss?"

"He is the agent of the big interests. They oil the machine and he runs it. He gets political power and they get the pudding."

"Why don't the people throw the bosses overboard and keep the track clear?"

"Because of human nature, and other circumstances, It's human nature to want a boss or a leader. Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence and then his followers put their necks under his yoke, and they have kept them there ever since. The English rebelled against a Stuart, and then made Cromwell so much of a dictator that he told Parliament to be gone. Labor people complain of the bossism of the man who pays them wages and then turn around and hire walking delegates and union presidents to boss them more than their employers ever dreamt of doing or ever will dream of doing.

"That is why democracy gets along so slow," he continued, "and why freedom moves by fits and starts. The people want to be free and they want a boss. One man gets them out of a tight place, and the next man puts them in another tight place. The voters put a President at Washington, and the business men set up a king of finance in Wall Street. Yes, sir, we are having two capitals in this country, with a lot of Congressmen on the Potomac and a lot of captains of industry on Wall Street. I tell you that it is the undying desire of humanity to have a boss. When the bosses get to running in opposite directions there is a head-on collision, and history takes on color. You have something like this in church affairs, don't you?"

"We do; there always is some infallible individual around: an infallible Pope, or an infallible higher critic, or an infallible expert scholar with his latest conclusions, or a founder of Christian Science who



rules to the last word which can be uttered in the service. We prance all over the lot in our demands for freedom in the pulpit and then refuse to permit a people the freedom to choose what they want taught for the comfort of their own souls and the welfare of their children. We are to be free to talk, but they are not to be free to hear."

"And you get the salary and they pay the bills? Well, that is a little bit strong."

"Yes, sir, I think sometimes that there ought to be an anti-cruelty society started to protect some churches from preachers who think that they should be as free as a cyclone that tears down the meeting house. I have seen men come out of church with their faces flushed with anger and women with tears in their eyes as they thought of the harm which that kind of preaching was doing to their children. They go to the service for bread, and some preachers give them a stone between the eyes. I used to do some of it myself; but I got to thinking that the people wanted a pastor to lead them into green meadows and not to the edge of precipices, and I made some change.

"I think as you do," I continued, "that the people want a boss, and it makes me feel uneasy for democracy sometimes. But for the same reason I propose to stick to the business of preaching Him who came into the world to be Leader and Commander of the people."

"Then you do not care to jump into the movement."

"No, I am not on that kind of a jump today."

"Good boy. So long." And he was off.

The next man with a movement wanted to reform church entertainments. They kept him buying tickets and going to suppers and recitals and this and that and the other thing, he said, until he could not rest.



"What is the good of it all?" he exclaimed. "Why are the women always getting up these suppers and making a man hunt for an oyster in a quart of water?"

"Why do the Wall Street crowd float stocks on water?" I asked.

"For the money there is in it, of course."

"And for the same reason the women float an oyster on water, for the money. But the Wall Street men put the money in their pockets, and the women put it into the church treasury. Roast your business associates before you howl at the women."

"There are too many churches, too many denominations, too much competition. What is the use of starting more churches than can live?"

"What is the use of starting more business houses than can live? A hundred business ventures die where one church venture gives up. Walk along a business street, and you see rent signs in windows; some business venture has been there and died. You don't see many rent signs in church windows. The commercial agencies publish a weekly list of bankruptcies in business; they could cover the church failures with a few figures once a year.

"Say what you will, sir," I added, "there is no line of business on earth run with more wise caution and closer to the laws of good economies than church business. In the world's business fools rush in where other fools have lost their last dollar, but in church enterprises men walk with their feet shod with a preparation of wisdom."

"Now, about denominations," I went on; "how many churches and fraternal or secret organizations do you belong to?"

"Let me see," he said, stopping to count; "seven, I think."



"One for every night in the week. And you belong to one church; and go to one service a week, if the weather is not too cold or too hot, and you complain about too many denominations. Are you reasonable?"

"Perhaps not."

"Well, I know how you reason. In matters of the world you reason from the grub-worm up, and in religious matters you reason from the arch-angels down. Whatever in worldly affairs is higher than the trail of the grub-worm passes, but in church affairs whatever is lower than the heavenly pinnacle is criticised. I am not finding fault with your standard for the church, but I am calling attention to the error in your conclusion. The ideal church, the church over whose towers and minarets no shadow will fall some day, has to be built up in a very imperfect world; and between you and me I think that denominationalism, competition, helps more than it hinders. The worst period which the church ever has seen in its history was during those long, dark ages when there was only one denomination. Our country has its multiplied denominations and its cities bristle with church spires; Mexico has little more than one denomination. On which side of the Rio Grande would you rather live?"

"Well, I am not about to sell out and move to Mexico, that is sure. But as you said a moment ago, the church stands for such high ideals that I do not like to see any flies on it."

"So you have started out to swat some of them? Is that it?"

"Yes, that is it."

"I can tell you how to swat this entertainment system of raising money. Hit it with a thumping contribution when the basket comes around, and get up a conspiracy with the rest of your brethren to do the same thing; and then the women won't have to water



the oyster to liquidate church debts. Certainly you have noticed how lonely a dollar bill looks in some contribution boxes, even if the congregation is large. The nickels are 16 to 1 over everything else."

"But I thought you said that the church is wise financially."

"So I did, and so it is. The church begins with nothing, seldom has anything in the treasury but a deficit, and yet gets there, even to the rim of the earth."

"I see your point," he said as he rose to leave, "and I hope that at the next supper I shall be able to see the oyster without having to get a magnifying glass to find it."

"Oh, go up to Oyster Bay and you won't have to strain your eyes to see something."

The last brother with a botheration on his mind was a man who felt troubled because there was so much preaching and so little result. Of course, he told me that Peter preached one sermon and had 3,000 conversions, and now we preach 3,000 sermons and have one conversion. "If preachers would preach right," he went on, "men would be converted and the church grow with leaps and bounds. I want you to join with us in starting a preachers' reform society. Yes, sir," he exclaimed with a whack on my desk, "that is what we need, a society to reform the preachers."

I told him that the preachers already were in so many reform societies that some of them did not have sufficient time to prepare their sermons, and that this class probably would rush into the movement and try to reform the good preachers out of their efficiency.

"As to Peter's great sermon and its wonderful effect," I said, "it humbles any minister into the dust as often as he reads that amazing story. But that sermon did not stand alone and could not be looked at as



we would at a giant oak in an open field. That sermon was preceded by the most extraordinary events that the human race has ever witnessed—the tragedy of the Cross with its Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, the resurrection of the crucified One, the ascension into Heaven, and the sending of the Holy Spirit from the throne above,—events which had not come to the minds of Peter and his solemnized hearers as a record across the ages, but with all the vivid, startling power of something seen with their own eyes, felt by every nerve and fibre of their being. It was a climax of centuries of preparation, an hour when the clock struck for the past, for the present, and the future. Do we wonder that at such an hour Christ's chosen preacher produced so great an impression? Is it correct reasoning or fair comparison to expect as much from the preacher surrounded by the commonplace of an ordinary Sunday?"

"No, I presume not; but I wish you would join our society. I want you for a vice-president."

"To stand around waiting for the president to die? But who is the president to be?"

He did not answer, and I inferred that modesty stood in his way. The interview closed with my telling him that one minister was all I could reform and that he was so near at hand that I did not need to join a society to reach him.

When he was gone, I said to myself: "Another society, another appeal for money, another set of officers in the little limelight, another man behind a desk dictating to a stenographer, another bunch of men telling other men how to do things—the great American pastime."

Then I fell into a brown study. A study is one thing, a brown study is another thing. The study has four walls. A brown study has no bounds. It mixes



with all things, runs off into endless space, into time where the clock does not tick and the flow is undisturbed. I thought of the dissatisfaction which was back of the man and his attempted movement, and of the disappointment which beats at the door, sometimes like a fire-alarm, sometimes like the petulance of unstrung nerves, sometimes like the tapping of a fading hope, and again with the firmness of a resolve which cannot be overlooked.

I said: "Surely it is a compliment to the minister, that the world expects so much from him that it can feel so much disappointment. It seems to measure our profession by the compass of all possibilities, and if we do not fill up the measure to the rim and the brim the world fills in the space with its complaints.

"But where in Holy Writ is it shown that the minister is responsible for all the failures? Listen to the wail of the prophets. Who was to blame? Listen to Jesus Christ's woes against Capernaum and Chorazin. Who was to blame? Listen to the note of disappointment in his closing discourses. Who caused the failure? In the parable of the sower all the seed was good, but some of the ground was hard highway, some was stony, and some overrun with weeds. And that is the world and the mankind of all time.

"The preacher has to contend with all errors, all darkness, all sin, all wrong, all stupidity, all apathies, all sicknesses of mind and soul, the world, the flesh, and the devil, the superstitions of heathendom and the hypocrisies of civilization; and if he does not straightway make a millennium out of the mass of it and the meanness of it, the magazine writers and other irresponsible critics proclaim the pulpit a failure."

I say that it is at once a compliment and a condemnation. It is a compliment to the preaching of the glorious Gospel that it has raised public expectation to



such a height, and it is a condemnation that we do not better meet the expectation. But the world does not need to rub it in. We all know it. The ministers in all the land who do not know it and feel it and lament it could be counted on the fingers of one hand. There be men who are the salt of the earth, the soul of sincerity, patient, faithful, fruitful laborers, and yet ready to put their hands on their mouths and their mouths in the dust, when they think of the difference between the performance and the expectation, yea, the aspirations of their own hearts. In that last summing up of things, who will have to answer for the failures? If 3,000 sermons strike only one man, where are the 2,999 others? Of the sun's flood of light only a two-billionth part hits our earth. Where does the rest go? Into endless, empty space, most of it. Where does the light of the sermons go? Into hearts that love darkness, much of it. But ever more it is true that there is good seed which falls into good ground, and there are harvests which are gathered in this world and in another world.

But after all, there is a baffling mystery in the failure of minds made for truth, hearts made for love, and souls made for hope, to connect with the greatest system of truth and love and hope ever given to the world. It is the disappointment of the moral universe.







## CHAPTER XXVII.

### WHEN RUMOR GOT ON THE WING.

**A**BOUT this time a couple of rumors got on the wing. It was rumored that I had a call from another church, and at an increased salary. The rumor grew every time it turned another corner. Fortunately, I was soon able to collar this report and put it down. I knew that a committee of some half dozen gentlemen had been present in my morning congregation. What happened after they returned to the hotel a friend told me. He said that they evidently had heard a considerable number of pastors in various parts of the country and that they had become experts in the sampling business. After hearing a man preach they would go back to their hotel and put him on a dissecting table, so to speak, and then get out their sharp knives and go through him. When they were done, the candidate was dead; and without waiting for the funeral they went out to look for another promising specimen.

"Some of the committee," added my friend, "thought that you were too young, others that you would not be a good mixer, others that you would be a better preacher than pastor. One thought that you talked too loud, another that you did not talk loud enough. One said you were too superficial, another that you were too philosophical. Another said he could not follow you, and another that he had arrived at the end of your sermon before you were one-third of the



way along. They seemed to want a man who always would be around and never be in the way; always on the job, but not meddling with things; directing, but not felt; visible, but invisible; a good organizer, subject to the powers that be; a strong man who knew when to weaken; a harmonizer who could gracefully retire when the obstreperous members got busy. They doubted whether you would fill the bill.

"At the end of it you were a dead man. After the dissection was over and while they were washing their knives, I heard one of them say: "Where shall we go next?" To which another replied: "Let us hunt up a row of wax figures; perhaps we can find a preacher there that does not speak too loud, or too long, or gesture too much, or part his hair on the wrong side."

"Keep your eye on the newspapers," said my friend, "and you will see it announced one of these mornings that their church has called the Rev. Dr. Wax Figure to the pastorate."

I was able, therefore, to say to my people that there was no substance in the rumor.

The other rumor had it that I was to marry a rich young widow. It was a lively rumor, all the more so because of the general impression that more widows marry than young women, Sammy. The rumor said that she was plain, but that her manners and her bank account were pleasing. Her fortune increased with the spread of the rumor. It began with a quarter of a million, and a few days later she had half a million. She was a thrifty old girl.

There was so much talk about it that I was almost afraid to call at a home where I knew that they kept a parrot, for fear that the mischievous bird would sing out:

"Polly wants a crack at you.  
Going to marry too! Hoo? Hoo?"



A brother minister congratulated me and remarked, "I hear she is well fixed."

"Yes, like a fixed star," I replied, "so far away that I do not know her."

"Nothing doing, then?"

"No, and what do I want with a wife? I find it difficult to please the church myself, and if there were two of us the difficulty would be doubled."

"When a church calls me, I give them to understand that they are not calling my wife."

"But if I had a wife and she was not called with me I should soon want to go back after her."

"The churches keep a minister on his travels fast enough these days."

"And it is easier to pack a trunk than to pack up a family and land in a chaos of household stuff and never know where to find anything for a month or six weeks."

"Don't multiply the difficulties."

"I am not. I am keeping them simplified to one."

The rumor about the young widow finally lost courage, and gossip took another turn, namely: that I had a love affair in Florida. This edition grew until it was reported that I had proposed suddenly, but the young lady moved slowly and asked for time to go back North and see the financial head of the family concerning the matter. Even the men jollied me about it, and a smart young broker said:

"Did you tell her you adored the ground she walked on?"

"No; what would have been the use to tell her that when land within a stone's throw of her could be bought for two dollars an acre? It might be worth while to tell a girl that you adored the ground under her feet when she was walking on a street where every foot of the land was worth \$10,000. But you couldn't



get anywhere with a girl in Florida measuring your love in land value."

"Love! What a word!"

"It need not worry you; but if you fellows have dropped it out of your vocabulary why don't you marry the multi-millionaires' daughters, and keep good American money from going over to Europe?"

"Because we do not have the goods. It takes titles, and our Simple Simon democracy is short on titles.

"Start an agitation for the protection of a title industry at home and supply the need. It will keep money from going abroad as much as a protective tariff."

"That is a good idea, but the titled bunch over there are bigger spendthrifts than Americans; and our plutocracy likes a spendthrift, the bigger the better."

"That is, the big leak in social economy is at the top?"

"Of course. Plutocracy sucks the money up from the bottom and spills it out at the top. It always has been so, and I guess always will be so. The Roman aristocracy did it, the feudal lords did it, the nobility does it, the autocracy does it, the plutocracy does it. The names differ; but they all are alike, all tarred with the same stick. They all have their schemes for doing it, and democracy does not stop them. They are like trees sucking sap out of the ground to make leaves on the top branches. They do it with trusts, with combinations, stock markets, manipulation of food supplies, political machines and high taxes, any old way and every new way to get the money from the masses up to the high-fliers.

"And you know how they make it fly—ten thousand dollars for a bull pup, another ten thousand for the wife's poodle, half a million for a yacht, and so on. And then when they can't make it go fast enough they



take a titled son-in-law to work on the job. What he can't do is not worth talking about. But I think we shall soon have some big enough spendthrifts to meet the wants of the plutocracy. You preachers can help a little by scaring them and making them afraid to die rich. Hurl Dives and Lazarus at them."

"But do you really think that with all our advantages and education for the American girl that we are only making her a spendthrift?"

"Certainly, if she can get hold of the money. Do you ever meet a rich girl who has any religion? Honest now, Doctor, do you?"

"Yes, sir, I met a rich girl last winter who had so much religion that she made me want to sneak out of town like a tramp, and there are others."

"Then there was a love affair in Florida?"

I have forgotten what reply I made to the gentleman. Perhaps a letter which I received the next morning had a distracting effect upon my memory. The letter was from Miss Kingsley, and among other things she wrote:

"We have seen some anxious days. Papa has been passing through a financial peril. His mining properties, of which I told you once, are the source of a handsome income; but some six months ago he discovered that a serious attack on the title was about to be made. Mr. Rosslyn, who is a very bright young lawyer, brought him the word. How he made the discovery he did not say, but I learned afterwards through his sister, my college chum, that he had been offered a tempting fee if he would go into the case, but declined. Papa talked it over with him, and then they both went West. They had a hard fight, Papa said, with the shrewdest and most conscienceless set of men that ever trailed mining titles for weak points. But they downed the enemy. Rosslyn is a wonder, Papa



declared, when he takes off his coat and rolls up his sleeves."

I laid down the letter with a feeling of relief that the Kingsleys had not lost the Western end of their income, but also with some fear that the smart young lawyer might not confine his interest in Mr. Kingsley's possessions to his mining properties.

Then I dropped into a meditative mood and asked myself whether life was only a wrestle with fate. How strong a young man seems! He walks into the future as if it were all his own. A little color here, and hope brightens. A little shadow there, and fortune falters. A little tangle in the skein, and the web is not woven. A little leap to a higher place, and the victory is won.

"The painter gazed on his canvas,  
Stretching before him so fair,  
Then lifted his soft white frost brush,  
Touching it here and there,  
Touching and blending with colors,  
From crimson to russet brown.  
And gilding the pathway, the stream and the bridge,  
Soft showers of gold came down."

The painter makes the picture fair; but the plodder on life's long way, what will he make? That is another story.



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### PREPARING FOR THE STRANGER ON EARTH.

I HAD been thinking for days about the progressive preacher. I had asked myself many questions about him: what is he? where is he? what is his relation to the past and what to the future? is he at the right angle?

In attempting to answer these questions I seemed to lack a viewpoint. But one evening my mother said that during the afternoon she had called at a home where they were expecting the visit of a little stranger and were making much preparation for the coming event. And she added: "When I saw it all, the warm little blankets, and all the other things which love thinks of to protect the little body and guard the precious life, I thought to myself what a hazardous thing it is for a little stranger to come into our world and what a good thing it is that a mother's love looks ahead and prepares for it." Her observation struck me with the force of a new suggestion. It seemed to give me the angle from which to look at that wonderful text, "Prepared from the foundation of the world," and that anything worthy of progressive preaching must link itself to the original preparation.

It grew upon me, and by the time I was in the study the next morning my mind was full of it. I thought that man was the original stranger in the earth, and he knew it—"they confessed that they were pilgrims and strangers on the earth." There was no



other creature like him. He was "the mysterious stranger," in a world of mystery, a mystery to himself, a mystery without, a mystery within, mysterious voices speaking in his soul, speaking in the winds, from the stars; mystery in the temple of his God, the God of mystery, mystery always saying to him, "Find me," and when found making more mysteries.

And danger everywhere, danger on land, danger on sea, danger in the wind that fanned his cheek, danger in the cloud which quivered with lightning, danger on the desert aflame with heat, danger in the blast of winter, danger from wild beasts, more danger from his fellow man. Danger to body, danger to mind, danger to soul, an enemy coiling in a word, a serpent's poison in a look, a betrayal in the friendly grasp of a hand.

Surely his Maker took great risk when He put man in the world, a stranger on a strange earth, a pilgrim feeling his way along an untrodden path with enemies of body and soul ambushed all along the way. Why then should we think it incredible that God never wanted him to get out of speaking distance and hearing distance; that He did speak to him, that there was a *Thus saith the Lord*, great commandments, a law of safety and a Word of life?

Grant that the great God put this stranger on the earth; and a Word of God, the Bible, is the most logical thing that you can think of. And what more logical than prophets? Man was struggling up the steep hill-side and the prophet flung a light across the heights. Man faltered in the darkness of the night and the prophet said, "The morning cometh." Call not the prophets a myth. God knew what the stranger climbing the hill-side and groping in the darkness needed.

And God knew man's danger from sin, its tempting power, its subtle power, its polluting, defiling and destroying power. Making a moral being was hazard-



ous. Putting him a stranger in a strange world had appalling possibilities of disaster—it is spoken reverently. Did man's Maker take the hazard without preparing for it? No, the Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world, "the Lamb which taketh away the sin of the world." The peril of sin was near, but the Lamb of God was before the sin, and He was able to save to the uttermost. Sin does not make a dark spot which He cannot make white. Sin does not pollute a heart which His spirit cannot cleanse. It was love looking ahead, preparing from the foundation of the world for the coming of the stranger on earth. O progressive preacher, do not explain it away. Do not make it less than God made it. Do not make a plan of your own for man's redemption. You were not at the foundation of the world. Open your heart to God's plan. Preach it, preach it!

And again, it has been the way of Providence that man should enter into a share of the preparation, that one generation should assist in preparing for another. You scoff at the past, but what it has done for us is of immeasurable value at this present moment. It stumbled, but it came along. Its wrecks line the shore, but it has set lighthouses on our stormy coasts. It fell into errors, but it speaks great words of wisdom to us when we are in confusion of mind. It tells us to keep to the right, when there is a precipice at the left. It has littered the way with dead leaves, but it has handed to us priceless gifts, treasures which it paid for with toil and tears and blood. We are "the inheritors of infinite inheritances." You boast of your speed, but how long would it take to cross the ocean if you had to go back to the log canoe of the primitive man and work up through toil of hand and sweat of brain to the greyhound which leaps over the water



with a fling at distance? You, smart man, jump from town to town on your lecture course; but if you had to begin with the little ox cart whose wheels were sawed from the end of a log you would have some trouble in reaching your appointments. When would your family ever have your Sunday dinner ready, if they had to begin the process of making knives and forks and china sets and table linen all over again? You sneer at the years which are gone and then come down out of your pulpit and put on an overcoat every thread of which has come out of the loom of time. When you are talking so proudly about running away from the past just stop and ask yourself what you would have to run in if it had not been for the past. The very shoes on your feet have been centuries in the making.

You boast of your freedom of opinion, freedom of faith, freedom of mind, and all that. You whoop it up in the pulpit like a Fourth of July orator at a country celebration. You are a spread eagle with a white tie and perhaps a bald head. Where did you get all this freedom? Go ask the battlefields strewn with the dead, where the furrows ran with blood. Ask the waves where the ships of war grappled, went down, and left the waves stained with crimson. Go ask the martyrs who died at the stake or to make a holiday for old Rome. I hear a voice in Egypt crying, "We cannot make bricks without straw"; and I hear Liberty cry in the past, "I cannot build without the bodies of the slain, without tears and blood to pour on the dry dust which makes mortar."

You go into the library to fill your quiver with arrows to shoot at the heroic figures of the long ago—you are a valiant warrior against men three thousand years away from you—but who gave us the treasures of the library? Did mountain streams wash them



down to your study table? Did the leaves of trees bind themselves into immortal books? Did fire-flies hold the lamps while crickets wrote poetry? Did frogs croak the oratorios which will enrapture the lovers of song and thrill the hearts of the multitude forever? The brain, the pleading heart, the passion and the pathos of the ages, are there. Take off your hat when you go into a library, not because the rules of the house tell you so, but to bow to the men of the past who had brains enough and soul enough to make libraries priceless in value.

Esau despised his birthright. He was a hairy man. Don't grow his kind of hair.

An American who made millions said there were only three generations between shirtsleeves and shirt-sleeves. What do the degenerate heirs of wealth despise? The money? No, the industry and the thrift which made the money. What do the degenerate souls of believers despise? The fruits of Christianity? No, the faith which made the fruits. Beware. Don't climb a tree for fruit and then pull its roots up after you.

You call yourself an optimist and paint rows of lilies and roses across the years of the future. And it is good to take the cheerful view. But you are blind in one eye if you do not see the evil in the world, and you cannot see straight out of the other eye if you do not recognize the connection between the past and the future. You know that a bank in America cannot do business with a bank across the sea unless there is mutual confidence. No more can you do business across the years of time without confidential connections between the great things already done and the great things hoped for. Tear down all confidence in the past, and your future expectations will turn to



chaos. You will not know where you are nor where you are going.

You are not a progressive preacher simply because you say so. Every man in a madhouse thinks he is the only Solomon in the place. You would have us believe that orthodox people have not felt the tingle of a new idea in their minds since Augustine somersaulted out of paganism into the Christian pulpit. But do you mean to say that if a man thinks straight he is not thinking at all, that his mind has got to jump the track and wreck the train before it can get a move on itself?

What do you build railroads for but to get there? And when will the church get there if it goes back every few decades and tears up all the tracks and blows up the roundhouse?

The law profession builds up a code by laying precedent upon precedent, decision upon decision, by rearing authority to high place. John Marshall is still the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court. But you put Augustine and Calvin and Luther out in the woodshed among one-legged chairs and rusted stove pipes. And nothing is an authority with you unless it is so fresh that the ink is not dry. But know this, that the great kingdoms, the kingdoms which reach far and wide and hold sway over things multiplied and vast, are the old kingdoms. The Mineral Kingdom, the Vegetable Kingdom, the Animal Kingdom, how old they are! And Jesus Christ says, "Come, inherit the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world." It is old, very old. God looked ahead when he was laying the foundations, and prepared for the stranger on earth a mighty kingdom, a glorious kingdom, a kingdom which would make his pilgrimage through the world a journey to everlasting safety and abiding peace. Hence, I say that the



really progressive preacher keeps in line with the plans prepared from the foundation of the world and obeys the marching orders of the King of the kingdom.







## CHAPTER XXIX.

### WHEN THE SHADOW FELL.

"O Father, let me not die young.  
Earth's beauty asks a heart and tongue  
To give true love and praise to her worth.  
Man's sins and judgment-sufferings call  
For fearless martyrs to redeem the earth  
From her disastrous fall.

**I**N the glow of October days, when the leaves were purpling the forest, I received a letter from Miss Searcy. She was with friends in the country, among the hills, and there were fine touches of poetic description in her glance at autumn's daily promenade. "But in spite of the beauty which gladdens the hills," she wrote, "and the radiant change of autumn tints, I am having little touches of the blues. Now I want to consult you about them, because ever since we had the interview concerning my unfortunate experience with a too previous engagement I have felt that you could understand my state of mind without misunderstanding my heart. And if you are like other ministers who have blue Mondays perhaps you know how to prescribe for the trouble.

"To begin with, let me give you some of my symptoms, for I think half the cure of the patient is through the relief in talking out the trouble. Don't physicians make a mistake when they put the lid on a patient's long story? It might save medicine. People think me very happy, because I am happy most of



the time, but an hour of the other kind goes a long way. Yesterday I said to the lady of the house here, who is a splendid specimen of middle age, 'Why are you so blue today?'

"She replied, 'If I must give you an honest answer, it is because when I was dressing this morning I saw a white hair in my head. It was the first time. How I resented it. I have been in the dumps all day about it.'

"'But why should that trouble you?' I said, 'with such a wealth of brown hair as you have? You can easily hide the impertinent little intruder.'

"'So I can, but I cannot hide the fact that it is the first thread in the shroud which time has begun to weave. I can fold a mass of brown hair over it, but all the same it will be a veiled prophet whose first little note of warning will bye and bye be a whole funeral. It is Old Mortality enlisting the hours in his ranks, and there can be nothing but surrender at last.'

"I pitied her, and I pitied myself, for I am only a dozen years behind her, and what are a dozen years to the clock which is everlastingly ticking and striking, or to the grim reaper with the scythe? I have been skeptical; I have doubted about the land beyond the stars, but here is the grim fact that I do not feel at home in a land of death. In my inmost soul, in your inmost soul, in all our inmost souls, we feel that death is an intruder. We resent it; we resent pain, sickness, and everything that assails life. Men call them natural, but we never get used to them. We never want them to call; we never want them to stay; we never want to go home with them. We are strangers to them and always want to stay strangers.

"It is not so in the animal world, but it is so with our human world. The animal world bows to its fate and makes no comment. A wolf snatches a lamb



from the flock, and the herd holds no communion of sorrow. A bird looks into the nest emptied by a destroyer and asks no questions. A father looks into a coffin at the face of his dead boy and angrily asks, 'Why did God take him away?' A mother holds the lifeless form of her babe to her bosom and says, 'My heart cannot, will not, let it go. My darling must be living somewhere.' I tell you, death is either a stranger or we are strangers in a world where death reigns. The animal kingdom may get along with it, for they never discuss problems. But beings who think of empires and have ambitions high as the stars and passionate longings which take hold on the ends of time cannot get along with it.

"They say that Lincoln was a melancholy man. He thought great thoughts, and therefore his mind dropped back into the clutch of melancholy. Somebody who saw Webster in the closing years of his life said that his face wore an expression of sadness deep as the meaning of his great eyes.

"But this is not all of my trouble. I come now to my real concern. If we are strangers in a world where death reigns, then we naturally and truly belong to a world where death does not reign; and that means heaven, and it also means that we ought to get right with the other world. And now you begin to understand my symptoms. You say at once, 'She is getting religion.' But why should an attack of religion mean an attack of the blues? I suppose that it is because in religion we are first sick in order to be eternally well. 'They that be whole need not a physician.' I am not wholly happy; I must be in need of the great Physician.

"Then I think, Why didn't I go home with my mother who died when I was a little girl? Why should I have stayed in a strange country? Mother



used to say to me, 'Come, Susie, let us take a walk today.' Would it not have been just as well on that last day if she had said, 'Susie, I am going to take a long walk today to a beautiful land where the flowers always bloom; come with mother.' But oh, no, she did not say that. She said, 'Susie, I am going so far today that you cannot go with me.' Then she stroked my hair, kissed me again and again, drew me to her bosom and prayed God to make me brave and strong and to watch over me all the way. And I know that is the better part, to be brave and strong and try to walk in the path which shines more and more unto the perfect day.

"But this is not all; of late I have begun to feel a nameless something. I do not know what it is, not a vision in the night, but more like the shadow of a dark wing falling across a bright path. I seem to be compassed about by the mystery of existence and to hear voices of fate speaking across a lonely land. The leaves of the forest, fading and flushing, dying and blooming, give me pain.

" 'O woodland thy odor through my brain  
Hath searched and stung with grief  
This sunny day, as if fear did stain  
Thy velvet leaf.' "

Just a week later my mother came to me in much agitation, saying, "Here is a dreadful telegram from Miss Kingsley."

I took it and read the sad message:

"Cousin Susie was fatally injured in an automobile accident this afternoon. The physician says that death is only a question of a few hours."

Miss Searcy died during the evening, as we learned from a report of the accident in the next morning's paper. According to the statement, she was one of a little party of young people who were taking a ride



in the afternoon. As their limousine came to an upgrade another car came down the grade at a rapid pace. When it approached the driver, by some strange mistake, let his car swerve into the one which carried the young people. It struck the side on which Miss Searcy was sitting, and she was caught in the deadly force of the blow. No other member of the party was seriously injured.

Later I received a letter from Miss Kingsley in which she said that they had planned to take the night train for home, and the ride in the afternoon was arranged as a parting pleasure trip. At the last moment she herself was prevented from going by a caller. "When Susie stood on the porch," she added, "she looked so beautiful and I felt such a thrill of admiration for her, that I threw my arms around her neck and said, 'How I love you!'"

"An hour later they carried her into the house, her beautiful face white as death. She was unconscious, but after a time she rallied a little and seemed about to speak. The effort was too great, and she closed her eyes again. About nine o'clock she revived and looked up into my face. A smile parted her lips, and she said: 'I am so glad you are here. It is the last time I shall see you, for I know I am dying. Yes, darling, we must part.' She paused a moment, and then said, 'I am very young to die, only twenty-four. So young to leave this great world! Where am I going?'"

"I bent over her and kissed her dear face and replied, 'The Master answered that question for us when He was going. He was for us on the Cross. He is for us at the gates of death.'

"'Yes,' she said, with a look of light in her face, 'He is for us; He is the Savior.'

"A few minutes later she said: 'It is growing



darker, dear; hold my hand. What a moment is this! I am changing worlds!

"I felt a little tremor in her hand, and she was gone. Then sorrow overwhelmed me. It seemed more than I could bear. While the eye looks and the voice speaks you can bear it, but when you know that the loved one will never look into your face again, never speak again, that there will be only silence and memory, and that memory will say, 'It cannot be, it cannot be,' and yet it is, the grief seems greater than we can endure."

They did not bring her body back to the city, but she was buried from the old home church where she had been a little Sunday-school girl and had sat in the pew with her mother. College mates and many friends were present, and one thought added to the grief of all—she was so young to die, a beautiful ray of sunshine caught away in sudden darkness. It seemed to me the saddest funeral I ever attended; and when they had laid her beside her mother I came away thinking of the years which would come and go, of the sunlight which would glow on the hillside, of the rain which would fall on her grave, of the passer-by who would pause and read the inscription on her tomb, while she knew it not. In all the march of the years she would speak no word, have no part.

Death seems such a finality. But One came armed and mighty to turn the dread finality into a glorious future.

As the days were lengthening into weeks I received a letter from Miss Kingsley, which told me that she had been passing through a great struggle. "Death seems different," she said, "when you look at it through tears which spring afresh every time a picture or a keepsake or a word penned by a dead hand reminds us of what we have lost. When we are talking



sentimentally about the two worlds we easily span the gulf between them, but when the heart is trying to see the one gone it is harder. We are like those who come and go across a bridge which has long stood over a stream. The river seems narrow, the passage over the bridge easy. But a flood suddenly sweeps away the bridge, and then the gulf seems wide and deep. We must build again, and on deeper foundations, a stronger structure. So I find now with my faith in immortality and hope of another life. A flood of tears sweeps away some easy beliefs. I have been compelled to go over all my views again, to call sentiment by its actual name, to look long and hard at arguments for immortality, to discern between illustrations and proofs. When I am further along I hope to write you again and ask for your judgment regarding it."

In the course of time the letter came, and I give it in the next chapter.







## CHAPTER XXX.

### ARE WE IMMORTAL?

**T**HE letter from Miss Kingsley came, with its study of the great question. I give it below.

I may as well say at the start that I have found much in the arguments for immortality which is not satisfactory. It is not strong enough to stand upon when we are reaching for something in eternity.

They call spring a resurrection and a proof of our resurrection. It is only an illustration. In the spring two trees stand together; one puts forth leaves, the other does not. The one was only asleep during the winter, hibernating. The other is dead forever. In a few years the remaining tree will be dead forever. What I am asking is, Do we live forever?

An acorn falls into the ground and dies. An oak springs out of it, grows, spreads its branches to the sunlight or battles with the storms. But this oak is not the individual which bore the acorn; it is another tree. It only means that this kind of tree continues. What I am asking is, Does the individual continue? The human race will exist a thousand years from now, but will I exist? When Rufus Choate was going away to Italy for his health his friends said to him, "We hope to see you back next year." He replied, "I shall be here next year, and a thousand years from now." Was he right? There are living lawyers, but



is Rufus Choate still living? Daniel Webster's last word was, "I still live." Does he still live?

All arguments or illustrations which prove only that a kind or a race continues to exist falls short of the real answer to the great question, Does the individual live? A favorite theory with some of the latest rationalistic philosophers is that we are immortal, but that our immortality consists in the impression which we have made on the Eternal Mind. Because that mind is eternal the impression will be eternal. And, as the Eternal Mind is more impressed with a good life than with an evil life, the good will have a more blessed immortality.

But does it satisfy us to be told that we shall be only an impression? Ten thousand years ago a fern laid its little cheek against the clay and died. Its substance dissolved, but the impression on the clay remained. The fern was no more, the impression was as abiding as the rock into which the clay hardened. My darling cousin turned her cheek to the clay; what I want to know is that she herself still lives. Sentiment alone does not answer that question. It is not enough that I want her to live. I wanted her to live longer here, but she died. Does death defy all our wishes?

We think we are immortal; and let us grant that it is some proof that we are immortal, for what we think we ought to be or can be is a great help in making ourselves so. Would a bird think it could fly if it had no wings, or if the air would not bear it up? But having wings, it hops to the edge of its nest, opens them and flies. We have the instinct of immortality, we talk immortality, sing songs of heaven and picture to our hoping hearts another world. Would we do all this if there were not something real to answer to it? And yet we make mistakes about ourselves, build cas-



bles which topple over, and dream of ships which never come.

Therefore I want this instinct of immortality, if we may call it that, fortified by something which we can call fact, something that these argument-loving, proof-hunting minds of ours can grasp. So I have reasoned about it along a line of things which we know. We have accepted it as a fact that Jesus Christ was the best being ever in our world, and He talked about another world as familiarly as He did about this world. He talked about going home to his Father as a school boy would about going home when school is out. Was this best being mistaken, or deceived, or a deceiver? We cannot think so without doing damage to our capacity for making estimates of character.

Again, the disciples whom he indoctrinated with this belief in another life, or eternal life, became the best men and women that the world knew. Was it a mistake that made them so good? Were they deceived into being righteous? Did they sow tares of error in their minds and reap goodness, fortitude, devotion, sincerity, blameless life? Can we believe that without destroying the sequence of moral values? Consider the difference between an early Christian and a Caesar, between the Roman rabble who filled the Colosseum to feast their eyes upon a bloody spectacle and the martyrs who died for their faith upon the bloody sand? Was the belief which had such power to lift men and women out of the degradation and depravity of an utterly debased and debauched environment only a mistake? It is not quite rational to think so.

Once again, the Christian doctrine of immortality changed the world's estimate of the value of human life. This is a fact of stupendous importance, and I do not want to let it stand on my own statement. I



find Mr. Lecky saying in that great work of his, "The History of European Morals": "It is a historical fact beyond all dispute that refined and even moral societies have existed in which the slaughter of men of some particular class or nation has been regarded with no more compunction than the slaughter of animals in the chase. The minute and scrupulous care for human life and human virtues in the humblest form was indeed foreign to the genius of paganism. It was produced by the Christian doctrine of the intestimable value of each immortal soul. It is the distinguishing and transcendent characteristic of every society into which the spirit of Christianity has passed."

This is great testimony, especially in view of the fact that the historian himself was somewhat of a rationalist. The characteristic of which he speaks is stamped upon our day as never before. It is the spirit which has prompted all our laws to protect life and health, keep pure the water we drink, the air we breathe, the food we eat, the milk which is given to infants. It is the spirit which has built hospitals and infirmaries and asylums, which takes defective humanity in its arms and helps it to live, which makes eyes for the blind, ears for the deaf, and tongues for the dumb. In a word, we are living in a safer and a better world today because nineteen hundred years ago men believed that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead, that He lives forevermore, and that his believers and followers are to live forevermore.

Now, my conclusion is that the belief which has thus taught the human race the greatest lesson of its earthly existence, namely, the value of human life, and which has changed the face of the world, cannot be dismissed as a superstition or a delusion. To do so, it seems to me, would be to turn our thinking on moral subjects into chaos, to strike at the center of



reason itself. What is the use to talk about reason if the world can get its best results, its immeasurable values, by tying itself to a baseless belief? In my own humble way I feel that I must believe in the Christian doctrine of immortality, not only to save my soul, but also to save my reason.

I have not been talking theory, but facts, the facts which have had stupendous place in the history of the last nineteen hundred years. I have been talking about the forces which, starting in the souls of men, have worked themselves out into the life of communities, the laws of nations, and which have blossomed and fruited in the welfare of mankind. This is as scientific as to study the forces which work upon man from without.

Lecky says that nature does not teach man that it is wrong to slay his fellow man without provocation. Hence, men who study only nature become so impressed by the abandon with which it has always slain that they cannot grasp the faith or fact of a future life. A natural scientist is only half a scientist. It is not difficult to see why he should be skeptical. He finds death such an awful fact of history, its trail everywhere in the past, whether millions of years ago or yesterday. Every spot of earth is a battle ground where it has conquered. The earth itself is a vast tomb, and all life was a procession to it. As long as the scientist follows this trail only, he will find it more easy to believe in death than in life beyond the grave. But Jesus Christ started a new trail, a new line of influence and transforming power in the mind and heart of the human race. A complete scientist, an all-around, four-square scientist, studies the facts of the inner man as well as the outer man, of the soul as well as the body, of the spiritual realm as well as the material realm. His study being more comprehen-



sive and more complete, his conclusions are more complete.

Stand now at another point of view. I said that I wanted my cousin to live because I loved her, but I did not have the power to save her. Does not God want those whom He loves to live? And He has the power to save, the power of an endless life. Therefore will He not save them?

Again, God loves goodness, and surely He does not want it to perish. But goodness is not an abstraction, it is a quality of living men and women. If the good man lives goodness will live with him. That God should decree to him eternal life seems to be a more rational belief than that He should decree death to him.

But death is a destroyer, you say. So it is. It destroys something. But every student of the earth's formations and the rise from the lowest kingdom to the highest knows that the process always has been along the line of destruction. There must be destruction of something in the mineral kingdom, something of form and constitution, in order to get something up from it into the vegetable kingdom. And something must be destroyed in the vegetable kingdom to get its higher quality of life up into the red blood of the animal kingdom. And man destroys in all kingdoms below him in order to bring something up into his kingdom. At the last step in the upward way the form of man is destroyed in order to take his spirit up into God's eternal kingdom. How scientific is the grand conclusion of the great apostle: "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

What the new form will be, what the new home



will be, we need not ask. I see a drop of water hanging to the fringe of a cloud. It starts to earth, and when it reaches us it has been transformed into a wonderful crystal, more beautiful than human ingenuity could make. The God who can so transfigure a drop of water in its flight from cloud to earth can also transfigure the spiritual body in its journey from earth to heaven:

Sometimes I hear even ministers speak lightly, if not scoffingly, of the music of heaven. "I don't want to stand on the golden street and sing all the time," says the scoffer. But now listen: we hear the hoarse voice of the storm, it terrifies us. Listen again; we hear a bird caroling in the tree, it gladdens us. Again we are in a hospital, and groans of anguish and cries of pain distress us. We pass to a great concert hall and beautiful voices fill our hearts with rapture. Earth is full of alarming voices and murmuring complaints, of cries of anguish. Through all time the multitudinous troubles of the world have been sending their wail of sorrow up to the ear of God. What in his answer? In heaven earth's cry of alarm, of pain, and sorrow, and despair, will be changed to music. The crashing of thunder, the roar of the storm, the wild cry of the wind, the angry voices of men, will all be subdued into the melody of song. It is the symbol of a glorious victory.

"Why should I falter in my faith,  
When He who made me keeps  
And guards His own and daily saith,  
'The earth with sorrow weeps,  
But Heaven is glad with songs that bear  
A harmony beyond compare.'"

Surely we can believe this, that nothing will be wanting in the home which God prepares for those whom He has redeemed through his Son. I never ask



myself such questions as, "Shall we recognise our friends in heaven?" I take it that in heaven we shall have all the power of recognition that we have here. It would seem better to ask whether we shall recognise ourselves there. For deep down in our hearts we have a feeling that God will need to make some changes in us before we are fit for heaven.

It seems to me that skepticism about another world overlooks the significance of the fact that we are in a world now. If one world is actual surely another world is possible. Every day we find that some new possibility is displacing some old impossibility, and perhaps we are only on the edge of this kind of discovery. We did not make this world. We cannot say that its Author cannot make another world. We do not come into this world by our own choice—there was a little something in Colonel Ingersoll's fling about that. But the brilliant skeptic missed the all-important fact that our Maker is now giving us a chance to choose a world in which to live. It is the greatest choice ever put at human disposal. We can choose a good world or a bad world. Could moral freedom be given a greater prerogative than that? And is it easy to see how else it could have been done?

Therefore I conclude that another world, our immortality, may be part of the Divine plan for giving free moral agents a chance to choose their own world. And I am always impressed with the feeling that the Divine plan of moral responsibility is committed to something more than what we get in this world. There does not seem to be room enough, time enough, in this little life for the plan to work itself to such a finish as to meet all our moral questions. When the line of conduct is made so absolutely important it does seem as if it ought to take us a very, very long way.



I know that to ask for immortal life seems a great request, but it will beggar neither space nor time. They are limitless; we cannot think without them. If we think of a line or a place, it always is in space; and there is space beyond. Why then should not I be given a little corner somewhere in all this limitless range in which to live? And time is endless. We cannot think of a time when there will not be further time. When the angel said that there shall be no more time he only meant time as we know it, too long while we are eager children, too short as we grow old, too uncertain as we are planning and wishing and hoping. All the incidents and accidents will be brushed away. There will be no midnight, nor noon; the shadows will not slope down the hill; there will be eternal duration. Why should not we endure with it? The very exhaustiveness of it calls for something. If that something is our immortality it will be in harmony with the deepest of human hopes and the profoundest of divine purposes as proclaimed in the gospel of Jesus Christ.







## CHAPTER XXXI.

### A SKEPTIC'S FOUR-FOLD CHALLENGE.

**A**N avowed skeptic, who occasionally attended my services, treated me to three or four letters in which he took exception to my statements. He seemed to be a kind of a bill of exceptions. "Why don't you answer some of the people who are undoing your churches?" he asked.

"Tell me what it is you want me to answer," I replied. You seem to have a good deal on your mind, fire it off."

He came back with a little shower. "I challenge you to go before your people with these questions," he said.

"What is your answer to the man who says that Science has destroyed Christian beliefs?"

"What is your answer to the woman who claims that Christian Science has superseded Christian belief?"

"What is your answer to the agnostic who says that he does not know?"

"What is your answer to the Evolutionist who holds that man made his religion along with houses, wagons and other things?"

"I want you to make these answers in public, not in private, and I suggest that you take a mid-week meeting for it."

I accepted his suggestion and announced that I would give the next weekly meeting to the matter. Of



course the room was more crowded than usual, for the skeptic brought some of his friends; and there are others who take more interest in discussion than in devotion.

In opening the meeting I said that we would have a brief season of prayer before beginning the business of the evening. The skeptical crowd looked alarmed, and a half dozen slipped out while the going was good. I took the questions in the order given, remarking that the shortness of the time would compel me to make the answers brief. I proceeded somewhat as follows:

“What answer have you to the man who says that Science has destroyed Christian belief?”

My answer is, that Science has not destroyed Christian belief. Somebody always has been destroying Christianity, but there is more of it in the world than ever. The author of Christianity was no sooner born in Bethlehem of Judea than Herod undertook to destroy Him and all He was bringing to the world, root and branch. Herod did not succeed. The Caesars undertook to persecute Christianity to death. They did not succeed. The emperor Julian changed the pagan program of destruction somewhat, but he did not succeed. The English and French Rationalists thought that they were giving Christianity a finishing stroke. “We have it reduced to twilight,” they jeeringly exclaimed, “and it will soon be all night for it.” But the Sun of Righteousness did not retire. The Voltaires and the Bollingbrokes have been dead a good while, in fact, so long that few people know what they said. But multiplied millions of people know what Christianity is saying. It is proclaiming itself in multiplied churches, in Bibles multiplied by millions, to Sunday schools with their



multiplied millions, and in the multiplied activities of Christian effort and human uplift.

Christians have made mistakes, of course, but the most colossal mistake ever made about Christianity is to think that it can be destroyed. That there have been some serious differences between science and Christian belief, I admit. These differences have been most pronounced along the line of geological research. The geologist has been long on time. If one of his alleged processes does not explain he adds a few million years to it. And if it still falls short, he adds a hundred million or two hundred million to it. He has things so very far away in the past that no one can draw a line on him.

The geologist is great on fossils. As a rule people do not like fossils in the pulpit, but the geologist looks for them in the rocks with devouring eagerness. They are a great joy to him. A progressive preacher knocks a brother preacher because he is what he calls a fossil; then he pats the geologist or naturalist on the back because he has found another fossil, a million or so years old.

An Old Testament seer found a valley filled with dry bones and put flesh on them and made them live. A geologist finds a valley full of dead bones and makes them several million years deader than they were before. This is one of the differences between science and Christianity. Science makes many things a long time and awfully dead. Christianity makes life. "I am come that they may have life and that they may have it more abundantly." Science puts its millions of years behind man. Christianity puts its millions of years in front of man. Science says to dead things in the rocky tomb, "Be dead a million years sooner." Christianity says to the living man, "Live a million years longer." That is why Christian-



ity cannot be destroyed. Men would rather have the race live longer than to have died sooner. Our fundamental is life, not death. It is a vast hope for the future, not an appalling recollection of the past.

But you say that science is doing much to make life more abundant, to make the hand of one man do what was once the daily task of scores of men, to fill our houses with conveniences and comforts, to send us on our journey with swiftness and luxuriant ease. So it is, but it is doing these things in the lands where church bells ring and where the Sabbath day gives the human mind a change and rest, time to recuperate and get a new grip on the past. It has not done these things where Christianity had not come. Heathendom has been stupidly stationary. Christianity makes a new kind of men, and they change the way of doing things and the way of living. General Chinese Gordon said that he found an African chief in full dress—that is, in a string of beads and an old silk hat. When an African community is converted the people change their style, they get on some clothes; and their barren fields begin to blossom like gardens. I repeat, Christianity means life and more life. So far as science lends a hand, there is no difference between them. They are true yolk-fellows. And what God hath joined together let no man put asunder by trying to make us believe that it is the mission of science to kill off belief in Christianity.

Herod had his particular and personal reason for attempting to kill Christianity in its cradle. Julian had his particular reason for assaulting it later on. When a man boasts that science is killing Christianity there is reason to suspect that he has some special or personal reason for wanting it killed. The Christian religion calls for repentance, and it may be



just as inconvenient and unpleasant for a scientist to repent of his sins—and we all have them—as it is for anybody else.

A man who wants to reason scientifically about religion should study the relation between causes and effects in religious life. If he studies the circulation of the blood in a frog's foot and then attempts to apply his conclusion to the action of a human spirit in religious life, he will make a mistake. Scientists have made many such mistakes in discussing religion—and very few of them can let the discussion of religion alone, because in the last analysis they find it the most vital of all subjects.

Another mistake is in thinking that scientists find it easier to explain the past than Christian believers. Both are confronted by the question, "In the beginning, what?" Christian belief says, "In the beginning, God." Science has no answer that makes fewer difficulties, in fact, no answer that does not make more difficulties. Put God in the beginning and you have a cause equal to the whole line of effect. Take away a Supreme Mind, an Omnipotent God, and progress presents a line of phenomena from lower to higher, from lesser to greater, from material to spiritual, in which the effect seems to be greater than the cause. This is not logical, it is not philosophical, it is not really scientific. With God in the beginning, we have not only an adequate cause to meet the demands of our thinking, but also an inspiration to high endeavor, an abiding Friend, and an Eternal Reward.

"What answer have you to the woman who claims that Christian Science has superseded the belief of the churches?"

I answer, that she made more money out of her claim with less evidence to prove it than any other individual that ever dabbled in that line of specula-



tion. For proof she submitted the cures which she alleged that she effected; but she maintained that physical phenomena are a delusion. Therefore she ruled her own evidence out of court.

She also told more people not to worry and at the same time laid up more wherewithal for a rainy day than any person who has put in a claim for an original discovery in religion.

Again, her theory maintains that there is no reality in sin, sickness and suffering. Therefore it differs radically, fundamentally, from the religion taught by the Bible, and has no valid claim to the name Christian. For the whole Bible scheme proceeds on the basis that sin, sickness and suffering are realities. The Bible does not dismiss them with a wave of the hand, or rather, with a toss of thought, as non-realities, but provides for them a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. I repeat, the difference is fundamental.

"What answer have you for the agnostic who replies, 'I do not know; you do not know; nobody knows.'"

The Agnostic says he does not know. It is his answer to the most important question of religion and of human destiny. The term Agnostic is a combination of two Greek words which mean not to know.

Now, we all are agreed that there was a time when the Agnostic's ignorance of everything was almost complete, namely, when he was a babe, a little lump of flesh, of hunger, squalls and colic. His first knowledge was of his mother. She was all the world to him, yea, more, all the universe to him. Her face was the heavens above, her eyes his sun and stars, her arms his earth underneath.



His next step in knowledge was his recognition of his dependence upon her. To her he turned as the source of all supplies and all relief. He knew that she loved him and he trusted in her help. As he grew older and the world began to antagonize him she was still his refuge. When something struck him he ran to his mother. When a dog frightened him he ran to his mother. Dependence upon a love which supplied his wants and protected his life was the order of his existence. And that is the order of the religious life. The Agnostic does not have to learn an impossible lesson in becoming a religious man. God's love broods over him; God's hand helps him. There is nothing new about that. He learned it when his mother smiled upon him, when she fed him at her breast. If he will go on with his God as he went on with his mother, he will enter into the largeness of life, reach the great end, fulfill the purpose of his being.

Human childhood is the longest of all childhoods, a fact much emphasized by scientists, and because it is so long it results in the greatest of all beings on earth. A deer is old while a child is still young. The deer becomes sport for hunters and hounds. Man becomes the finest fruit that earth holds up to heaven. We call ourselves the children of God, and are proud of the distinction. But childhood is dependent. As soon as dependence on the parent is over we are no longer children. Eternally dependent upon God, we are eternally His children. We can destroy the childhood only by refusing to recognize the dependence and wresting ourselves out of His hands. The long childhood under God makes the soul so great, the destiny of man so wonderful.

But the Agnostic says, that destiny is the one particular thing about which he does not know. The



first question which we are compelled to ask him is, whether he wants to know. A witness under cross examination says he does not remember. The attorney changes the question so that the answer will be more favorable to his side of the case, then he remembers. Another unfavorable question, and he does not remember. After a few repetitions of this kind the spectators begin to suspect that he does not remember because he does not want to remember. So with the Agnostic when he much protests ignorance. He is suspected of not wanting to know. When a child he learned that he pleased his mother less as a bad boy than as a good boy. His reason teaches him the same thing about God. Religion is not trying to teach him an unheard of and impossible lesson when it tells him to please God. And if he does not know that goodness is the way to God and badness the other way, it would seem that it is because he does not want to know. He knows that a bad lot of people do not make a happy home and therefore ought to know that they will not make a happy hereafter.

Just what God's home will be, he does not need to know. Much of it can be left for discovery at the important time. A man does not need to know the elementary composition of water. He knows that it satisfies thirst, and that is worth more to him than all the scientific knowledge about it. So with the water of life. A man can drink and live without being a scientist. "The Spirit and the Bride say Come; and let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will let him take the water of life freely." Is the Agnostic athirst? Does he want to come?

Mr. Huxley, who had agnostic spells, says this of the Bible: "By the study of what other book could children be so much humanized and made to feel that each figure in that vast historical procession earns the



blessing or the curses of all time according to the effort to do good and to hate evil?" Therefore, what the agnostic needs to know is the value of his Bible, if he has one; and if not, to go and get one.

"What answer have you to the evolutionist who holds that man made religion as he learned to make houses, wagons and other things which he wanted?"

In making answer to this question permit me to begin with an incident. When I was a boy a man who was one of my father's parishioners told me a story which he said had helped him in life and might be useful to me. "We lived on a farm, the man said, and it was my job as a boy to mount a horse in the evening and bring home the cows from a wide open range. One evening I came to a little river which ran through the range, and heavy rains had swollen the stream until it was running bank full and very swiftly. Some of the cattle were on the other side and I tried to make my horse cross the river. But the knowing animal refused to take the risk. I kicked it in the sides and hit it with the cow whip, but it stubbornly refused to play the part. After a night's sleep over the matter I believed that the horse had saved my life. You are a minister's son, my boy, but horse-sense is a mighty good thing for you or for any other man's son to cultivate."

As a Christian believer I have tried to have some horse sense about this stream of evolution which has been pouring like a flood through modern thought. I do not want my Christian faith to be swept away by this flood. I have seen Unitarian ministers carried down the stream into a misty sea of Rationalism, and have seen ministers of evangelical churches swept down to Unitarianism by it. They get where the water is too deep to wade and too swift for them to swim ashore and they go down. And the astonish-



ing thing about it is that they wonder why people who are standing safely on the shore are not carried away with them. A lot of them need a Noah and his ark.

I waded into this stream myself once, but when I found the water too deep and my feet going from under me a friendly hand threw me a life-line and I came ashore. After I had wiped the water out of my eyes and dried my clothes, I made up my mind that progressive preaching could not run with the current toward rationalism. A calling in which belief is so fundamental as it is in preaching must make its progress toward faith, not away from it. I am not quarreling with evolution. I am simply refusing to let it sweep my feet off the Rock of Ages.

Evolutionary preachers tell us that the fall of man was a fall upward. But my observation is that men are not falling up into heaven. It costs a climb.

A man-made religion makes its own god. The old-time pagan religion makes its god of wood, stone or brass. The fire-worshipper makes his god of sun, moon and stars, or the fire on the hearth. The fetish worshipper makes a god of whatever is convenient. The Greeks made their god of human nature, and they were a tough lot of gods. The modern man is more refined, and when he constructs his own religion he makes his god of figments of the imagination, conceptions, philosophies, theories. He is only a subjective god; he has no objective existence. As one of the moderns expressed it, he is only a term for our thoughts about the matter.

But in spite of all these vagaries of the modern mind there is a solemn sense of the fitness of things which holds on its way to the kingdom of God. There is a faith too profound, too earnest, to accept any mere human program of religion. It declines to be-



lieve that our salvation came up from protoplasm, through varying forms of life, through sap of tree, and vein of animal. The soul, not merely speculating about religion, but yearning for deliverance from the guilt and power of sin, looks to the great God above, to the Savior on the cross, to the regenerating Spirit. Now and evermore the Church of the Living God will sing,

“Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.”







## CHAPTER XXXII.

### THE EVOLUTION OF AN EVOLUTIONIST.

A PROFESSOR who heard the address in reply to the skeptic's challenge asked me to say something further on the subject of evolution. "I think that evolution has unsettled many ministers," he said, "that it has put them where Lincoln told one of his generals he had put himself, when he had half of his army on one side of a river and half on the other side, that he was like an ox half over a fence."

I acted on the professor's suggestion, and at the next meeting I spoke on "The Evolution of an Evolutionist."

"An evolutionist," I said, "is a striking illustration of the difference between man and the rest of the world in which he lives. Man is the one being in the world who studies the rest of it, thinks about it, talks about it, asks where it is going, what it is made of, who made it, and if nobody made it how it came to make itself. Nothing which walks on four legs or flies in the air or swims in the sea asks or discusses these questions. You have to think of it but a moment to see how great the difference is. Now the evolutionist, I say, is a pronounced illustration of this difference, for he asks so many of these questions, tries to answer so many of them.

"How came man to have this kind of distinction, faculty or capacity for considering and pronouncing



upon the rest of things? The biblical account of this distinction, as given in Genesis, is that when God made man he brought the rest of the things to him to see what he would call them. There we have it as the Divine intention that man was to take a good look and a long look at the creation around him, at all the things made, and give his opinion about them and names to them. And this is what the evolutionists have been doing, eagerly, laboriously, incessantly, and they have done much naming, and they also have been abundantly free with their opinions. That is to say, the scientist is distinctly provided for and made part of God's plan for man at the beginning of the Bible. The faculty for passing upon other things came, not from protoplasm, but with the image in which God made man, and the impulse for investigation came from a Divine suggestion or direction. It was just as much God's original intention to have man an investigator in the material world as to have him an actor in the moral world. God is interested in man's opinion about what He has made as well as in his attitude toward the moral laws which He has made. In the sight of God correct opinion is an important part of character. In both respects the race has been slow, made many blunders, fallen into many errors, in a word, been a pretty bad actor; but man is getting there.

"Now take Darwin, the apostle of evolution, and think for a few moments about his antecedents; that he was a man born in a Christian country, educated in schools of Christian beliefs, biblical beliefs, a man of religious beliefs himself, according to his own statement. Out of this atmosphere with its multiplied influences and impulses and hints and intimations and inspirations and aspirations he went forth to begin his investigation. He traveled far over the



waters of the Pacific, among the South Sea Islands. If Charles Darwin had been born in the South Sea Islands where they never had heard of Christianity or known the Bible would he have become the great evolutionist? Not a bit of it. No faded tradition or lingering remembrance which came up from protoplasm would have made him the distinguished investigator. It was not in the original cells of matter to say, 'Let us go to now, and make Charles Darwin.' He got his start, his impulse, from the Christendom out of which he came to the cannibal islands; and that Christendom came out of the Divine plan with the Bible for its chart. His later confessions seem to indicate that he afterwards lost his religious beliefs. But he would have missed his place in history, in the world of science, and the remembrance of mankind, if he had never felt the touch of religious influence.

"Alfred Wallace seems to have been a twin apostle of Darwin, and he also was a child of the same Christian land and people and environment and also a pronounced believer in spiritual existences. Even the German extremists, the men who make evolution a consuming fire for everything religious, were born and moved and had their being in the land of Luther and the Reformation. Their intellectual impulses came out of a religious environment. No other kind of environment ever produced an evolutionist or ever could produce an evolutionist. An evolutionist is distinctly and emphatically an evolution from the religion of the Bible. That religion alone can and does give to the human mind the conception or idea of order and law which sends men courageously and industriously into an investigation of nature for law and order. The mighty man of the Old Testament is a law giver, and Bible-taught men know that there ought to be law in nature and therefore go on a hunt



for it. To find it is their great joy. They carry it home as the shepherd did his lost sheep.

"I repeat, it is the impulse of religious belief, a faculty given with the Divine image, which sends men down into nature to take a long, hard look at it and name it. All the actual discoveries of science answer the Divine wish to see what man would call things. Darwin and Lincoln were born on the same day, one gave an intellectual push, and the other a moral push.

"Because of the same attribute man goes into nature to lay hold of its forces and make them do his work for him. That also is in the same passage of Genesis. Man was to have the world which spread before him to subdue it and enjoy it. The forces of the natural world were having an idle time of it until the enterprising man began to get busy with them. Steam power knocked the lid off the tea kettle and then knocked off for the rest of the day. Now it is kept harnessed to the wheels of industry day and night. Electricity played in the clouds until Franklin got a kite line on it, and now it is kept busy on land and sea and over the sea and under the sea.

"They talk about intervention as unscientific. Was there ever such a misapprehension? All important material progress is intervention. In fact, civilization is a history of interventions. We go forward because we constantly are intervening in the forces of nature, making them do things which they would not do if left to themselves. Man's power to intervene, his knowledge and will and determination to compel the laws and forces of nature to do his bidding, are the source and cause of his progress in material life. He is a born intervener.

"What is the use of saying that God could not intervene if He wanted to do so, when we see man who is made in His image doing it every day?



Wherever you have mind, will, and purpose, you will have intervention in forces which are below them.

"This power of dominion, I say, is something which we find along side of the investigating powers set forth in Genesis—'let us make man in our image, and let them have dominion.' It all is linked up with the Divine image. God rules over all, and because man is made in His image he has the conception of dominion over all the forces, the impulse to compel them to do his bidding. He differs from the rest of creation in this respect because he was made different. In a most important sense man himself was an intervention.

"But you ask why the evolutionist rejects the idea of intervention? His theory explains it. According to his theory a type is made or fixed by what it feeds upon. If it feeds in the shallow waters along the shore it develops long legs and a long bill. If it feeds on the leaves and twigs of the tree top, its neck grows until it becomes a giraffe. The evolutionist goes into the fields of nature looking for natural sequence, an uninterrupted process. His eyes look for that, his ears listen for that, his hands feel for that, his mind feeds on that. To use the language of the street, he is a rubber neck for that kind of thing, and consequently he develops a long neck in that direction. He becomes very long on natural sequence, short on intervention. He is a victim of his own doctrine of natural selection.

"Professor Huxley makes a remark which confirms this view of the matter, 'Color,' says the professor, 'is the name for that group of states of feeling which we call red, blue, yellow, etc. In the same way a law of nature in the scientific sense is the product of a mental operation on the facts of nature. Laws of nature are a mere record of experiences.'



"That is, the evolutionist bends all his mental operations to a certain line of discovery, and his product reflects his mental bias; it is red, blue or yellow according to the change of his mental action; and his alleged laws of nature are a mere record of his experiences. The exact truth of the matter, or the actual laws, will not be known until it all has been thrashed out through so many minds as to rub off the color and the varied and multiplied mental experiences have been tested by all the laws of logic and actual knowledge. This may take a hundred years yet, a thousand years yet, which means that the evolutionist is not yet fully evolved. He insists upon much time for his process in the past. It is rather brash for him to think that his own evolution could be completed in so short a time. To say that the evolutionist is still very much in the raw, a callow youth, is only to apply to him his own theory. Darwin and Lincoln, I said, were born on the same day. The people whom Lincoln emancipated are not yet at the top of the hill, nor is Darwin's theory at the top of the hill.

"Again, you ask, why if the evolutionists start out with the impulses mentioned as coming from the Divine image, some of them become skeptics and array themselves against the very book to which you trace their origin. The answer is similar to that given to the previous question. They become like what they feed their minds upon. They fasten their minds upon matter, its energies and its action until they become materialized. Put the water of a stream into a narrow mill race and it will turn a wheel and grind a certain kind of grist. Make it overflow a surrounding plain and it will produce a rich harvest. The intense evolutionist gets his mind into a narrow channel and grinds out an attractive, speculative theory,



but he does not raise much of a moral or spiritual harvest.

"The radical or extreme evolutionist is a man who traces a material effect to a material cause and keeps on the backward trail until he reaches that extreme pitch where he declares that matter was eternal, energy eternal, life eternal, all ultimate facts, and possessing potentialities which came up through millions of years of evolution until they reached the present stage of the universe. He does not need a God, nor a Bible, nor a church, nor an altar, nor a preacher. How protoplasm happened to get it into its mind to produce a preacher millions of years later is one of the questions which bothers him. He cannot explain that it was because nature has a fondness for the ornamental, because all preachers are not ornamental. Nor can he explain that it was because nature has a strong conception of the useful, because he does not believe that preachers are useful, but an expensive and meddlesome nuisance. About the only thing he can say is, that nature sometimes got off on a wrong tangent, and when it was producing a preacher was one of these times. But the preacher turns up his nose and replies that when it was producing a skeptical evolutionist was another of the times.

"In a word, the skeptical evolutionist is another victim of an overdose of his own theory. A giraffe is a freak in the animal kingdom—it gets its head too high in the air. Likewise, the atheistic evolutionist is a freak among men. He gets his head too high in the air. He needs a change of diet. He should go to church, attend the midweek meeting; and he also should pause to consider what his family will want the minister to say about him and for him at his funeral. For wherever his theories may be headed, he himself is headed for a funeral.



"But why do you say that some preachers are like an ox half way across a fence? Because it so well illustrates the fix they are in. The ox cannot hook the dogs which are barking at him in front nor kick the dogs which are snapping at him in the rear. So with the preachers who are so impaled on the evolution theory that they cannot defend the Bible and the Christian faith from attacks in front or in the rear. They have gone so far with the radical evolutionist's opposition that they cannot accept the Bible as a Divine revelation, nor the miracles of the Bible as historical, nor anything, in fact, which contains the supernatural element. And yet they are in pulpits which were made by belief in the supernatural. It is a bad fix to be in. And worse yet, they think they are progressive preachers.

"But you ask, who is the progressive preacher? He is the preacher who accepts Christianity as the great intervention. So far as evolution is a doctrine of the survival of the fittest it is largely a doctrine of progress by calamity. Darwin's survivors were the strong members of a tribe or species which remained when a calamity, disaster, deluge, or destruction was past. But the high purpose of creation required a change from progress by disaster to progress by prosperity, by peace instead of war, by strengthening the weak instead of destroying them, by the cure of ignorance and sin and evil things. And this is what Christianity does.

In the next place, evolution was a process of variation. As Herbert Spencer puts it, and his interpretation is generally accepted, evolution proceeds from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, taking the original element in differing and far apart directions until the type becomes fixed. But now we all know that the important thing is, not to get further apart



and stay apart, but to get together. The old evolutionary principle was to hunt the other man down and do him up. The Christian idea is to hunt for him as a lost brother and make up with him and lift him up. Christianity breaks down the middle walls of partition, wipes out lines of separation. As Paul finely puts it, 'There is neither Greek, nor Jew,, barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free. All are one in Christ.' He made the great at-one-ment, is the Atonement, the wonderful Intervention. He came between the strong and the weak, the high and the low, the Jew and the Greek, to make them one. He came between man and his sin to make him holy, between man and his bondage to make him free, between man and death to make him live. He is the Mediator between man and God, between earth and heaven, between death and life, between time and eternity. I repeat, Christianity is the great Intervention.

"I also repeat that the evolutionist is constantly in danger of his own theory in another direction. His process of variation produced a beast of prey which rends and destroys, and running in another direction produced the bird of prey which likewise destroys, and running in still another direction produced the serpent with its deadly poison. The same process at work upon the evolutionist himself may produce the rabid skeptic who rends and destroys sacred things, or the cold blooded skeptic who poisons the minds of men with doubts and unbelief. He himself may easily become any one of the human menagerie. There are times in his career or evolution when he stands very much in need of a providential intervention to save him from becoming a hyena or a serpent in a religious community.

"Now a final word about human knowledge. A



scientist claims that he investigates and knows; a philosopher, that he thinks and knows; and a religious believer, that he hears and knows. But all are compelled to admit that what they do know is small compared with what they do not know. In my humble judgment it requires the whole man to know. To illustrate, through our physical nature we know that water satisfies thirst; through the intellect the scientist knows the component parts of water and its relation to other forms of matter; and through our moral nature we know that it is wrong to supply a city with polluted, disease-breeding water. That is to say, the material world is related to us physically, intellectually, and morally; or, reversing the terms, we are related to it in this threefold way. Hence the knowledge of it to be complete must be of this threefold character, through the senses, the mind, the moral endowment. Or to change the terms again, there must be intuitive knowledge, the intellectual knowledge of relations, and the moral knowledge of relations. Whether this is what the latest famous philosopher, Mr. Bergson, means by his theory of knowledge, I cannot say, for his friends and his critics are not agreed as to what he does mean. Like all philosophers, he finds it exceedingly difficult to tell exactly what he believes. Beecher used to say that the Bible could be understood in spite of the commentators, and perhaps some of the philosophers can be understood in spite of their attempts to make themselves understood. At all events, Mr. Bergson undoubtedly is right in holding that we cannot know things correctly by tearing them to pieces and putting our knowledge into a formula, but that knowledge must seize them as they are, whether at rest or in flux.

“So far as evolutionists only tear things to pieces



by investigation and put them together in a theory, their knowledge is incomplete. And their authority is unreliable in the great relations and responsibilities of human life. It will not be accepted as final, it cannot be accepted as final. The common knowledge of the human kind, the great basic convictions of men, the tremendous sense of responsibility, the mighty fears and hopes surging through the hearts of generations, the intimations of destiny, and the vast expectations ever rising before us, will bear down their theory and irresistibly assert the right of mankind to a broader, greater, more spiritual interpretation of the universe.

"The evolutionist is still too narrow, too immature, to be the spokesman of the race. In a thousand years from now he will know more and assert less.







## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### A NEW YEAR AND ANOTHER CHURCH.

**I**T IS difficult to keep a holiday civilized. It has a tendency to run away with itself. We had to put the lid on our Fourth of July celebration to keep it from blowing us into kingdom come. The New Year celebration is not quite so hard to manage, but it is a peculiar mixture, a mixture of hilarity and solemnity. One man takes too much, another man takes a sober thought of time. We feast and we falter, we celebrate and we hesitate. We know that we have fallen far short in the past and we fear that we may do so again. To meet this fear we try to brace up with resolutions. We put a new figure in our letter heads, and then we put it in our own heads that we are somehow going to cut a new figure in life. But personality is persistent. It is at once our confidence and our terror, our big possession and our big responsibility. Mountains are big, but they are not personal. We are a little lump of clay, but personal, therefore bigger than mountains, and no other day in the year so measures us, so sizes us up and down in our own thoughts as the first day. We balance low performance in the past with high resolves for the future.

And New Year resolutions are valuable while they are strictly fresh, but not after they have been in cold storage. When they begin to crack and crumble the wheezy little man who buys "ra-ags and ole' ir'ne"



in the back alley would not haul them away as a gift. They would be rough on rats if the rodents found them in the garbage box. They are the poorest old junk that time stumbles over while it is groping through the dark, coupling midnight to morning.

My New Year resolution confined itself to preaching. I resolved to be a better preacher, because that was my line. Flying is a bird's line, the better it can fly the more likely it is to save the expense of furnishing a meal for a cat. Running is a deer's line, the faster it can run the safer it is from the hound and the hunter. The better a minister can preach the safer he is from the people who soon want a pastor to move on—the people who look for another.

In order to be a better preacher I thought of resigning and accepting a call which had come from another church. I knew that new pastors succeed, for the news columns of the religious weeklies told me so—there could be no doubt about it. We cannot question their reports, that when a new man comes to the pulpit the people come to church, that the "Sunday school increases 40 per cent, the mid-week meeting 29 per cent," etc., that the young people begin to stay for the evening service, and that the leader of movements against pastors is almost persuaded to be a Christian. Therefore it made a change seem attractive. It appealed to me.

But before deciding I went to see a brother minister of more years, and hence of fewer illusions and egotisms.

"If I knew what you wanted to do," he said, "to go or to stay, I could advise you more wisely, for in my experience I find that people seeking advice want to be advised to do what they want to do" (my friend was something of a wag).

"Fire away in the dark," I replied.



"Well, sir, there are material advantages in going to another field," he said with a twinkle in his eye. "The people warm up to a new pastor and give him a donation or a shower, enough sometimes to start a cross-roads store, pans, water pails, coal buckets, rolling pins, brooms, butter, lard, hair-oil, honey, pancake flower warranted to bake without early rising, and other things which suggest themselves to a benevolent frame of mind."

"Oh, stop, I am not wanting to leave the pulpit to become a floor walker in a department store, and I am full of that kind of advantage already. My people gave me a Christmas shower, slippers, duplicated and repeated until I was in slippery places, house robes and jackets, until there was no room in the closet even for a skeleton, paper weights enough to throw at all the cats which try to serenade me under the back window, with a few left to shy through the open window at the vocal music student in her rip-roaring hour of practice, not to hurt her of course, but to put a scare on her wild efforts to improve her voice by disturbing the neighborhood. No, I don't need a shower. Get away from that."

"Do you want to preach over your old sermons?"

"No. I want to take the old text and the old subject and preach the sermon which I did not preach the other time."

"You have growth in you. The young minister who preaches a sermon a second time just as he preached it the first time is not likely to get out of his knee pants. But is Providence pointing to the new field? Is the salary better?"

"Don't spring that. In every minister there is a man who has to be fed with what money buys in the market, but there is another man who sees beyond salaries, high or low. The ministers of America make



longer and greater preparation for their calling and work for smaller compensation than any other class. Ten years of expensive preparation and an average salary of from \$600 to \$800 a year. Think of it!"

"What then is the attraction of the new field?"

"A college in the city, students, students in the congregation."

"Now you are hitting something; you are talking. I hear the tread of time in the student procession. The college yell is a wild thing, but it has the call of the future, the captaincies of the coming generations. Go, and God bless you."

I resigned, to take effect the first of February; and accepted the call, to begin the first of April. I wanted two months' time to get my breath and also to stand on the sidewalk and look at the pulpit procession go by.

Before my pastorate closed I went into the back room of a faithful friend and asked him to talk plainly to me about my pastorate and preaching. He was a physician, and he looked at me as if I had asked him to perform a painful operation, but finally got out his mental instruments and proceeded.

"As a preacher," he said, "you have too many virtues for your faults. A man cannot be a very popular preacher without pronounced virtues and pronounced faults. The applause of his admirers and the knocking of his critics make noise enough to attract attention to him. It was so with Spurgeon, it was so with Beecher. It is so with the most surprising American evangelist that ever called 'old mutts' to repentance. If there was not so much saw-dust in his preaching, such flocks of people would not hit his trail.

"If perfect preachers could do the work angels from heaven would be put in the pulpits and not men from the seminaries. If you were more venturesome,



you would have more faults, make more mistakes, but you would get further. The man who is afraid of making mistakes does not make much of anything, and that is a serious mistake.

"Don't try to be a scholar in the pulpit, but a preacher. The Congregationalists have raised up scholars for their pulpits, and their following is still numbered by thousands. The Methodists have raised up preachers and their numbers run into the millions.

"Don't bring the scaffold used in building your sermons into the pulpit with you. Leave your chips on the woodpile. But above all things, don't raise more questions than you can answer. There are plenty of people in a congregation who are born interrogation points, who want to know where Cain got his wife, etc. Tell them he got her in the front parlor when the light was turned low, and don't raise any question about the old man. He might come down stairs with something on his mind, if not in his hand.

"One thing more, shoot near the center. Don't waste valuable ammunition firing around the edge. The preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the center shot of the moral world.

"But why are ministers becoming so restless?" he asked. "Who do they want to change?"

"Because we live in such a restless country," I replied. "One of a minister's difficulties in keeping an American flock on the way to heaven is that there are so many other places in this world to which they want to go. We live in the best country and yet run around more than other people, to see the rest of the world, to see old ruins, old abbeys, old mummies, old Egypt, any old thing. We like to look at the coffin of a dead king, at the spot where he took the heads off his queens or killed his subjects to make them love him.

"When we are not crossing the ocean we are



swinging around our own country. We go to the seashore or the mountain in summer and to Florida or California in the winter. When we are not going to a summer resort or a winter resort, we are moving. If we are downtown we move uptown, if we are uptown we move to a suburb. If we are in a house we move to an apartment. If we land on a lower floor we move to an upper floor. It is our solemn principle of habitation not to stay put.

"And this is another of the minister's troubles, especially in the larger cities. The old-time pastor knew where to find his people. The present-day pastor looks to see where a family lived last year and then does not go there. He goes up to the sixth or seventh floor of an apartment building to find them. If the mother is expostulating with a daughter for going to dances every night in the week or daddy is lecturing the rest of the family on domestic economy, and they don't want any more lecturers around, the pastor can tip the elevator boy and get down on the double quick or make a hurried retreat by the fire-escape.

"Yes, we are a restless people. All the time on the go. The automobile struck a psychological time, because it takes us somewhere else on the quick. It is here to stay. Everything is here to stay which helps us to go. But for the same reason the minister does not stay. The 'go' has caught him in its whirl."

"There is force in what you say," replied the doctor, "but every calling has its difficulties. We have troubles of our own."

"Yes, but you have some advantages over us. When you go into a house you are an authority, but when we go into the pulpit we are not always nor much of the time an authority."



"No, and you have been dissipating the authority which you did have. You have questioned the old authorities, the Bible and all, until you have undermined the authority of your calling. It was professional suicide, but you did not seem to know it. You have unsettled the people, and that has increased the restlessness of the people of which you complain. You call it readjustment, but your readjustment does not connect up, and religious belief is in a flux. Don't you know that a preacher must tell people to believe or he will kill off his calling? Do I need to go six or eight blocks to hear a man give me his doubts, when a half dozen doubts come into my mind in a minute?"

"Not unless you want exercise; but you have another advantage. People do not like to be sick, and they do like to sin. When they feel bad they go for a doctor. When they are bad they don't go to the minister or want to go to church."

"You ought to make them feel bad when they sin. The trouble with a lot of preaching is that it makes sinners feel better than it does the saints. When you make sinners feel that there is not going to be much of a shower after all they begin to think that they don't need you. It is some more of your professional suicide. But that is just when they do begin to need you. When young men stop going to church they will soon be going to the doctor. Doesn't every doctor in the land know it only too well. We have to stay at home from church on Sunday to listen to their troubles because they have stopped listening to your preaching."

"Perhaps if you were in the pulpit on Sunday instead of in your office you could warn them of the wrath to come."

"That is your job, not ours. When a minister tries to put out the fire against sin in the Bible he kindles



it in flesh and blood and bone. Better burn the wrath into a man's mind than have it burn into his bones."

"But you certainly will admit this advantage to your calling, nature helps you; it is healing. But human nature does not help us, it is sinful."

"Yes, in a way, nature is healing, but the great English doctor was right when he impatiently exclaimed, 'Why do you say nature wants to save life? It does not want to save life. It wants to kill us, and it will kill us to clear the ground for another generation.' And this is what a doctor has to work against all the time, sure death in the long run. The run may be 40 years, 60 years, 70 years, four-score, but at last crape hangs on the door, and the man hangs around no more. 'The silver cord is loosed, the golden bowl is broken, and the mourners go about the streets.' General William Henry Harrison escaped all the death traps that Indian warfare and all kinds of weather set for him, but death got him in a month at the White House. It set a hoard of office seekers and politicians upon him, and they shook him to death as a dog does a rat. Old Zack Taylor fought Indians, Mexicans, swamp fevers, and all the other exposures to a standstill; but when he feasted in the big state dining room at Washington death gave him a dose of cholera morbus, and his wife threw herself on his dead body shrieking, 'I knew it would kill him, I knew it would kill him!'

"Yes, sir, while there are laws of health, valuable beyond expression, yet after all there is a law of nature which kills. The great apostle never said a truer thing than this, 'The law kills'."

"Yes," I replied, "but He also said, 'We are saved by grace.'"

"So he did," said the doctor with great emphasis, "and that is what preachers must preach, if they are



going to get anywhere or have us get anywhere except in the cold, hard clutch of death. You may call it grace or what you will, but I know that there must be something which is above and beyond what we know of law if we are not utterly to perish in this awful round of destruction. Saved by grace sounds good to me."

"On rising to leave I said, "I thank you heartily, doctor, for this talk; is there any other word you want to say?"

"Just one word: we have learned in our profession to keep our instruments very clean, to sterilize them and all that. It is four-fifths of our progress, and yet it is only going back to Moses and his minute directions about cleansing pots and kettles and hands and food. Cleaning up prevents disease, which is better than curing it. And it is in line with what you ministers preach when you tell us to keep clean morally. Progress in your profession and in mine is pretty largely a matter of learning how to avoid pollution. You are teaching the world to clean up against sin; we are teaching it to clean up against disease. Our professions are twins."

"Yes, doctor, and you and I are brothers."







## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### THE RESIGNATION AND RETURN TO FLORIDA.

**T**HERE is more comfort for a minister in resigning a pastorate to accept a call to another than in being resigned to a fate which compels a change. Sometimes the latter taxes the finest Christian heroism, and it is becoming rather common.

My trouble was in squaring accounts with my church. I felt that I had been using the church to learn how to preach, practicing upon it. But how can a young minister learn to preach, except by preaching? And he must begin on somebody. I had begun on these people, and they had endured it. The world loves a young man, and for that reason they had loved me. The world believes in young men in spite of their inexperience, and that had saved me. A farmer looks at his field of young corn when it is green as grass hopefully, tenderly, for he knows that by and by it will have ears. And so the church seemed to have thought that I would ear out by and by and take on more wisdom from the voices which speak to a man in the practical experience of his calling.

I had come to them with a knowledge of the people who live in books, some of them very long dead and others very fictitious and unreal. But I found it necessary to preach to people who live now, not in books, but in houses, on the street, in the struggle for daily bread and the battle with the forces of evil. I had to acquire a new knowledge of my fellow men



and learn to preach to them. It was a double task. I had been a subject of the schools, a fellow-citizen of the critics; now I had to become a fellow-citizen of the fellow-citizens whom men address when they rise to speak from the platform. In a word, I was in much need of a making over, and, as I say, I felt that the account was somewhat against me, that I ought not to have been quite so much rewarded for practicing upon the church so freely.

In my farewell sermon I admitted as much of this as the occasion would bear, and then went on to express the hope that some good had been done. I said, "God was moved by the tears of a troubled king. I have seen your tears, and they have moved me, moved me nearer to the heart of the compassionate One, taught me that earth has some sorrows which heaven alone can heal. If I have turned tearful faces toward the fountain of eternal love I thank God for having given me that privilege.

"I have seen your problems, seen how deep and how old many of them are, that they have come along the ages, as clouds sweep along the mountain sides. And I have realized that no human program is sufficient for the solution of some of them. If I have turned your thoughts toward Him who is the Explanation of all things, I thank God for having given me this privilege

"I also have seen what a little word can do—'the Kingdom of God is like a mustard seed.' This is a minister's consolation and encouragement. If the pulpit had to put a full-grown kingdom into the human heart armies of ministers could not do it. Many of you were good enough to take my little seeds of sowing and make a harvest. I thank God for it.

"My experience among you has been peculiar in one respect, namely, in something of a change of theo-



logical attitude. We all know that one of the serious factors in human affairs is 'the man higher up.' It is so in business; it is so in politics; it is so in religion. In religion this man gets between his fellow man and God. In Christ's day he was a rabbi, a Pharisee or a high priest. In Luther's day he was a pope. In our day, as I now view matters, he is a higher critic. But whatever he is called, or whatever else his pose may be, he claims high authority, more than belongs to him or is safe for believers. In the past he usually claimed more authority upon the divine side of religion than belonged to him. At present he is claiming more authority from the human side than is good for religion, too much authority for scholarship.

"I confess that as a student this scholarship had its fascination for me. As a preacher I began to see the danger and disaster of its excessive claims and broke with it. If the change has made me a better preacher I thank God for humbling my pride and making me more obedient to His voice and more responsive to the great needs of your spiritual life and the cry of your immortal souls.

"So I leave you, both humbled and thankful. I also rejoice in leaving you to think what God can and will do for you through His faithful servants in the days to come."

When my work with the church closed I expected to use my two months' leisure in visiting other churches. I wanted to see how some of the preachers did it, and how others did not do it. The one is about as important as the other. But the first week of my vacation had not passed when I began to feel restless. Perhaps it was because I had nothing to do. Perhaps it was because the hegira to Florida put its spell upon me. The Kingsleys had gone in December, and Miss Kingsley wrote that her college chum, Miss Rosslyn,



was to be her guest for the winter. Of course, I did not admit that the chum disturbed me, but I had a feeling that I did not want any more Rosslyns down there.

Anyhow, I did not seem quite myself, and my mother noticed it and got worked up about it. She spoke about it in the evening; and the next morning, as luck would have it, she saw an announcement of the death of an acquaintance in the daily paper, and heart trouble was the cause. She looked across the table at me with much concern and remarked that heart trouble was becoming rather prevalent. I replied that I thought so too, that there were four hundred million people in China, and whenever there was a rumor of war they all had heart failure.

"That is too far fetched," she said, "and I can't have you joking about so serious a matter. I fear that you have heart trouble. You must get off to Florida; it did you so much good last year. But you must see the doctor before you go."

The doctor came, with a twinkle in his eye and banter in his voice, and I had to meet him on his own ground. He felt my pulse, and said that it was still beating. I told him that this was encouraging, that I did not want to think that I was dead, or that my pulse had got up my sleeve and was trying to put something over on me.

"Let me see your tongue," he said.

"A preacher's tongue is to be heard, not seen," I replied, with a sly look at my mother.

"Just so, but open up and—shut up."

I relaxed, and he gazed at my organ of delivery. "It looks well," he said; "it is not wearing out; and it is still hung in the middle," he added, with a chuckle.

"That is as it should be," I replied, "for if it is



hung in the middle I can talk on both sides of a question, which is fair."

"There is nothing the matter with you, and I don't see why you need to go to Florida. Have you any interests there which need looking after?"

"None which is paying big interest on the money."

He seemed puzzled, which did not strike me as being professional; for doctors look wise, not puzzled.

After he was gone mother sat with a determined look on her face, and finally remarked, "I don't care what the doctor says, I want you to go to Florida, for I know you need the trip. Mind your mother."

"All right, mother, I'll go if you'll go with me."

"Certainly I'll go with you, for you have no church now, and I don't need to stay at home to sit up with it."

"Put on your wraps, and let us be off."

"Hold on, boy, hold on a bit!" she exclaimed with a flutter.

A week later she had her wraps on, and we were off. I felt that she had some artistic designs in her mind, but I was glad all the way down that she had come along, because she brought things to pass which added to the scenery inside the car.

An ardent woman suffragist was aboard the train, a bright, strong woman, with a robust disposition to communicate her views and a conquering tone of voice. Mother warmed up to her beautifully, but it did not require much to set the woman in motion. When mother asked her why the suffrage movement had gained such headway, she unwound her explanations with rapidity.

"It was because man was making such a mess of things," she said. "Man has a strong body and a strong opinion of himself," she went on, "but he also has strong appetites. He wants strong drink and



tobacco and all that. He needed a regulator, and the suffrage woman has stepped in to regulate him. The movement got its impulse from the Woman's Christian Temperance Union's war upon strong drink. These women said that we would never have the right kind of men or the right kind of government until the strong drink habit and business were killed. Not caring for the stuff themselves, it was easy for women to get on the water wagon; for all reforms begin with people who do not need reforming and work over into the class who do need reforming. Men had tried temperance societies, but with little success. When the women got hold of the reform they made it go, for they had no hankering after the stuff themselves.

"Then they saw that they needed votes to get there, and they went after suffrage. This accounts for the rush of the movement. But there also is another reason. The watchword of the temperance movement is, 'Protect the Home,' and the American man is a home lover. I give him credit for that. He toils for home, sacrifices for home, lives for home. And just as soon as woman began to talk suffrage for the sake of protecting the home he tumbled to her plea. My first husband is dead and I am now living with a second husband, and both of them stayed at home, I tell you. Woman suffrage is changing the face of human affairs. It is bringing in a new age."

"What do you mean by a new age?" asked mother.

"I mean an age of obedient husbands," replied the woman with a triumphant air.

"I thought that the age of democracy was to bring the millennium," said mother.

"No," replied the suffragist, "that has been the dream, but dreams are sometimes flighty, and this is one of them. The plain fact of the matter is that the devil is one of the most democratic of individuals. He



has a high old time with the high-brows and a low-down time with the down-and-outs. He is the original hale fellow well met with all the old sinners and all the middle aged sinners and all the young sinners in the world. You can't down the devil with a democracy made up of men. The Lord knew it, and therefore He made the promise about bruising Satan's head to woman. When woman gets where she can whack Satan over the head with her ballot he will know it. Think of a lot of old sinners in Congress and legislatures believing that they can reform the devil and his followers, because they are working under a democratic form of government! Isn't it absurd? It can't be done. The woman suffragist is a political, economic, moral necessity. She is the advance agent of the millennium."

This settled the matter. The suffrage sister slowed down, and then with a glance over my way she said, "Your son is a minister? I like ministers; they look so nice in white ties and black coats and their hair combed. But why don't they vote as they pray?"

"I don't know," replied mother, "but when you have the suffrage will you pray as you vote?"

"Perhaps, but we are so busy with the movement that we don't have time to pray."

"If that is the case, it will be a soft jolt that you give the devil."

The train was now running into Chattanooga, and mother asked what the long rows of little white stones standing over the hillside meant.

"They mark the graves of the men who fell at Chicamaugua," I said. "Young men die, and government lives."

"Young men die and women weep," added mother.

"Some day women will stop the warring and the weeping," said the suffragist.



"Every reform has its some day," I remarked, "its sweet, sweet some day, when all will be lovely."

After leaving Chattanooga we began marching through Georgia,—Georgia is the heart of the South—and here the great cotton factories appeared at the edge of the towns.

"We are regulating these factories all right," said the suffragist. "We don't intend to have women bringing forth children only to be stunted and dwarfed and worked to death by greedy men. They say that the present generation discovered the child, and it was woman who hastened the discovery."

"I don't know about that," mother replied, "for I think that if the baby of a thousand years ago had the colic in the night the man of the house must have discovered the child, or he was too dead asleep to discover anything."

"You are facetious."

"Possibly, but not as ridiculous as the reform women who are so much concerned about the children of other people and have so few of their own. What I should like to know is how you are going to have a working world if you train up the children to regard work as a hardship, a wrong and a crime. It is the tendency of reforms to go too far, and we shall have to be pretty careful about this reform against work."

"I admit the danger," replied the sister, "but it is impossible to conceive of a generation of lazy Americans."

In the morning a rush of warm air came through the car, and mother exclaimed, "What is that? Is the woods on fire?"

"No, we are in Florida," I said.

"I wish I had left my heavy clothes at home."

"You may wish that you had a feather bed when you retire tonight."



"I wish I hadn't come."

"Oh, no, you don't; you will wish that you could stay always."

"I don't believe it; where is my fan?"

"Breakfast are now being served in the dining car," called a waiter.

"A cup of hot coffee will make you feel better, mother. Come along."

"I feel cooked, but I'll go. When do we reach the resort?"

"About the time we are through breakfast."

There was something of a delegation at the station to meet us, and Mr. Kingsley took us to the hotel in his car. Bob was not there to take the baggage, and on inquiring, I was told that "Captain" Bamby was not handling baggage now, but was a deputy sheriff; and I also heard that it was through "Colonel" Kingsley's influence that he secured the position.

Before evening mother had fallen in love with the blue sky, the flowers, and the palms, and was listening with rapture to the mocking bird which gave a daily serenade from a neighboring live oak.

In the afternoon I walked with Miss Kingsley on the bank of the river, the gleaming, beautiful river.

"It is just as beautiful as ever," she said, "but it makes me sad, for cousin Susie loved it so much, and we hardly missed a day without coming to look at it. But now

"Those lips that echoed the sounds of mine  
Are as cold as that gliding river,  
And that eye, that beautiful spirit's shrine,  
Has shrouded its fires forever."

"It is so hard to believe that she is gone. One woman could not have loved another more than I loved her, and how can I have it so?"



“‘One year ago—a ringing voice,  
A clear blue eye,  
And waving curls of sunny hair,  
Too fair to die.

“‘One year ago what loves, what schemes,  
Far into life!  
What joyous hopes, what high resolves,  
What generous strife!

“‘One year—one year, one little year,  
And so much gone!  
And yet the even flow of life  
Moves calmly on.’

“Yes, the even flow of life goes on, and while I know it ought to be so, yet it adds to the pain to see the great world move along as if we shed no tears, uttered no sighs, and nothing had been lost out of life. A sparkling dew drop falls from an overhanging bough into the river and then is gone forever. We can weep, but we cannot wait. We too must go on with our part. The sweet sorrow may make us better, while the call of life should make us more heroic and true.”



## CHAPTER XXXV.

### UNDER THE LINGER-LONGER TREE.

Once on a golden afternoon,  
With radiant faces and hearts in tune,  
Two fond lovers in dreaming mood  
Looked for a leafy solitude.  
Wholly happy they only knew  
That the earth was bright and the sky was blue,  
That light and beauty and joy and song  
Charmed the way as they passed along.

**W**HY is a poet? Because there is a something which others do not get. The poet gets it.

There is a something in philosophy which the philosopher does not express, a something in history which the historian does not record, a something in science which the scientist does not analyze, a something in the stars which the astronomer does not catch in his telescope, a something in religion which the theologian does not formulate; always and everywhere a something more which only the poet can reduce to expression.

But is there no poetry in the rest of us? Certainly there is poetry in us, otherwise the poet would work in a vacuum, blossom in a desert, sing his song to a deaf world. Poets we all are, but too weak to work it into form, hazy, lazy, limp. We dream and imagine, build air castles and see rainbows and angels and heavenly worlds. Poets give it voice, and therefore are a class. We all are on the rounds of their ladder. They climb to the top and are seen and heard; we



keep near the ground and are unknown. We call them sentimental, but they help us to think about everything which belongs to life, from philosophy to drudgery. And there are times when they are specially useful.

It may have been such a time as this for me when I strolled along the river bank again on a golden afternoon. Anyhow I felt an attack of poetry coming on and turned my steps toward The Linger-Longer Tree for shelter. Through some strange conspiracy between impulse and circumstance I found Miss Kingsley seated on the rustic bench, and she also seemed to be in a poetic mood, for she immediately pointed to a beautiful cloud with the joy of color in its fleecy folds, floating across the blue. "Our life is like it," she said, "set against the limitless and glowing in the light eternal."

But her friend, Miss Rosslyn, was with her, and that did not seem so poetic. Fortunately she soon remembered that she had an appointment to go auto riding at that hour and withdrew. "Miss Rosslyn is a dear girl," said Miss Kingsley; "we were like sisters in college."

This remark chilled me a trifle, for I did not want the sisterly idea to go too far. In an awkward kind of way I said, "No doubt you have seen the announcement that her father is to retire from Congress and that there is a movement to pass the seat over to his son."

"Yes," she replied, "and papa is in the movement. Mr. Rosslyn is a very smart young man; don't you like him?"

"Pretty well," I stammered, "and I think I should like him still better if he were further away."

She looked straight into my eyes for a moment and then her face colored deeply. For once Miss Kings-



ley had lost her wonderful self-control. To relieve her embarrassment I told her to look at a great school of mullet which were leaping across the water.

"Where is Mr. Rosslyn now?" I asked. "I have not seen him for a day or two."

"He has gone down the coast to see the Senator, who has a fishing camp near Jupiter."

"You mean the big political boss?"

"Yes," she replied, "and papa does not like that."

This was more encouraging.

"He wants him to break with the bosses," she went on, "for he thinks they are a nuisance and a danger. But Mr. Rosslyn says that to do so would be breaking his political neck before he got started in the race. He says that we do not know their influence, that powerful interests are back of them, that they would soon start an undertow, with an editorial thrust here and an interview there, a squib today and more squibs tomorrow, and one lie coming down the road and another around the corner, and by the time they got through with him his friends would hardly recognize his remains. Papa tells him to defy the bosses, and he says that he will when he gets to Washington and has a standing place."

"You seem to have talked it all over," I said; "is it a family affair?" Her only reply was a stern look, and I hastened to apologize, with the remark that I could easily see why her father was concerned about the evil influence of political machines and bosses, that I thought the same way myself."

"Did you ever wish that you were a politician?" she asked.

"Sometimes, and sometimes I wish that I were a blacksmith. He hits a hot iron and every blow counts. When he is through he can see what he has done. I pound on cold iron and half the time I cannot see that



I have done anything. A politician makes a speech and the people applaud, stamp their feet, yell, and then they vote. A preacher does his level best and the people sit as silent as gravestones, go out silently when it is over, go home, and the church is silent. The preacher is the only one who has made any noise. It is oppressive, smothering—the loneliest job that a human ever taxes his organs of speech to put over. It thrilled me to hear the people shouting amen when you talked. I could be a preacher too if they would amen me a few times.”

“Just give us a chance again,” she laughed, “and I’ll get Captain Bamby and Lucy and we’ll make an amen corner and whoop you up good. But you should not be too much disturbed by silence. The greatest effects are produced in silence. Who hears the grass grow or the leaves unfold or the flowers bloom? A procession of spring blossoms marches up from the South and nobody hears its tread. The face of the earth is transformed and there is no sound. The great resolves are made in the silence of the soul. It is one of the achievements of preaching that it silences the clamor of the many disturbing voices of outer life and gives the inner life a chance to assert itself.”

“That is an encouraging view of the matter, but one good hearty amen from you would go a long way with me.”

She looked at her locket, and I made bold to ask her whose picture it held.

“Here it is,” she replied, opening the locket. “Who does it look like?”

“I should call it a Joan of Arc.”

“So it is. I read much about her when I was a young girl, and I felt that of all women she had the courage of her convictions. She thought she could do great things, and did them. So I put her picture in



the locket which mother gave me because I thought the combination would help to keep up my courage when I felt faint-hearted."

"Joan did daring things, and perhaps that accounts for your daring on that Sunday afternoon. But what became of the picture which my mother gave to you when you were a little girl to keep you from crying?"

"It is gone long ago. I wore it out looking at it," she said with such a merry little laugh that the mocking birds must have been tempted to imitate it.

"How glad you must have been to see the original again?"

"Yes indeed, my heart thumped so hard when I saw you rise in the pulpit that morning that I was afraid mother would hear it. You know I always felt responsible for you because I predicted that you would succeed. But I wanted to put you out of the synagogue before you were through with the sermon."

"It was a narrow escape. What saved me?"

"Oh, I did not feel quite so bad the next morning, and when I met you on the river bank I thought you looked better on Monday than on Sunday—progressive preachers usually do. A secular day is more becoming to them. On Sunday they get up into the air or away in the mists; during the rest of the week they keep near terra firma."

"And so you concluded to tolerate me a little longer?"

"No, I concluded to trust my prophecy a little longer."

"What do you think now?"

"I think you are coming along splendidly. The year has done wonders for you."

"I have learned some things."

"Tell me some of them; I am interested."

"I have learned that there are difficulties of thought



which cannot be escaped by changing theories. They are in the twilight zone between the material and the spiritual, and will be there until the perfect day comes.

"I have learned that liberty means freedom from what hinders and freedom unto what helps. The first signifies little without the second. The one may only be the liberty of the skeptic; the other completes the liberty of the believer. It is Christianity's measureless contribution to human freedom. And this has taught me that a preacher is not progressive simply because he is going away from something; he must go towards something. The signs of progress are in front, not in the rear. 'I press toward the mark,' said Paul. I also have learned that the desire for change is one of the most difficult of all human forces to manage. It inspires progress; it hinders progress. It upsets a settled program of progress simply to escape monotony. It flies back to evils from which we have escaped for the sake of a change. The stupendous task of the progressive leader is to keep the passion for change on an upward curve, for it is sure to move in a curve.

"Another thing which I have learned is that an opinion is not a message. The pulpit does not lose power if it preaches a message, and messages were not born today nor yesterday, but are as eternal as the difference between right and wrong, as God himself.

"One thing more, no human program is or can be equal to the redemption of the world from sin. It must be God's program. The world cannot outgrow its sin. It must be saved from it.

"I do not mean to say that I did not know these things before, but I know them much better than I did a year ago."

"I felt that my expectation of you would not fail," she said.



"It is my turn now to have some expectations."

"I think you have had them for some time."

"And you watched them grow."

"They interested me."

She said this with a fascinating little smile and I felt encouraged. When we finally rose to go the world seemed very beautiful. There was music in the Linger-Longer Tree; winds from the orange groves came with their fragrance, a crimson glow was on the Western sky, and the mocking birds were singing their evening song. At the cottage we found the two mothers in the pergola. They looked at us, glanced at one another and then rose and greeted us with a shower of congratulations and kisses, and then kissed one another.

In the excitement of the moment I kissed all three. It was a happy time.

THE END.











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